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LETTERS
OF
DE QUINCEY,
THE ENGLISH OPIUM-EATER,
TO A YOUNG MAN WHOSE EDUCATION
HAS BEEN NEGLECTED.

PHILADELPHIA:
JOHN PENINGTON,
169 CHESTNUT STREET.
1843.

**C. Sherman, Printer,
19 St. James Street.**

PUBLISHER'S PREFACE.

THE Quarterly Review, notoriously chary of its praise when in political opposition, after a copious extract from the English Opium-Eater's recent notice of Shakspeare,* exclaims, "Who, after reading such passages as these, does not regret that the author has written so little!" This sentiment will be emphatically echoed by those readers of the following letters who can appreciate the depth of thought they evolve, the peculiar raciness of the style, and who can sympathize with their writer in his enthusiastic love of learning.

They originally appeared in the London Magazine for 1823, when English magazine literature was in its zenith. Among the writers whose contributions at this period placed and maintained the

* In the Encyclopædia Britannica, 7th edit.

London in the front rank of British periodicals were Lamb, Hazlitt, and De Quincey, "the English Opium-Eater." The productions of the first two have all, it is believed, appeared in separate forms, but only a portion of those of the latter. This hiatus it is the object of the present and of a future publication to fill up.

Indocti discant should form the epigraphe to "Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected;" but men of mature age and scholarship will feel in the following pages the necessity of preserving in its integrity the oft quoted line—

Indocti discant, et ament meminisse periti.

November, 1842.

LETTERS
TO
A YOUNG MAN, ETC. ETC.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR SIR,

When I had the pleasure of meeting you at Ch——, for the second time in my life, I was much concerned to remark the general dejection of your manner. I may now add, that I was also much surprised; your cousin's visit to me, having made it no longer a point of delicacy to suppress that feeling. General report had represented you as in possession of all which enters into the worldly estimate of happiness,—great opulence, unclouded reputation, and freedom from unhappy connexions. That you had the priceless blessing of unfluctuating health, I know upon your own autho-

— rity. And the concurring opinions of your friends, together with my own opportunities for observation, left me no room to doubt that you wanted not the last and mightiest among the sources of happiness—a fortunate constitution of mind, both for moral and intellectual ends. So many blessings as these, meeting in the person of one man, and yet all in some mysterious way defeated and poisoned, presented a problem too interesting both to the selfish and the generous curiosity of men—to make it at all wonderful, that at that time and place you should have been the subject of much discussion. Now and then some solutions of the mystery were hazarded: in particular I remember one from a young lady of seventeen, who said with a positive air, “That Mr. M——’s dejection was well known to arise from an unfortunate attachment in early life,” which assurance appeared to have great weight with some other young ladies of sixteen. But upon the whole, I think that no account of the matter was proposed at that time which satisfied myself, or was likely to satisfy any reflecting person.

At length the visit of your cousin L—— in his road to Th—— has cleared up the mystery in a way more agreeable to myself than I could have ventured to anticipate from any communication short of that which should acquaint me with the entire dispersion of the dejection under which you laboured. I allow myself to call such a disclosure agreeable, partly upon the ground that where the grief or dejection of our friends admits of no important alleviation, it is yet satisfactory to know, that it may be traced to causes of adequate dignity: and, in this particular case, I have not only that assurance, but the prospect of contributing some assistance to your emancipation from these depressing recollections by co-operating with your own efforts in the way you have pointed out for supplying the defects of your early education.

L—— explained to me all that your own letter had left imperfect; in particular how it was that you came to be defrauded of the education to which even your earliest and humblest prospects had entitled you: by what heroic efforts, but how vainly, you laboured to

repair that greatest of losses : what remarkable events concurred to raise you to your present state of prosperity ; and all other circumstances which appeared necessary to put me fully in possession of your present wishes and intentions.

The two questions, which you addressed to me through him, I have answered below : these were questions which I could answer easily and without meditation : but for the main subject of our future correspondence, it is so weighty, and demands such close attention (as even *I* find, who have revolved the principal points almost daily for many years), that I would willingly keep it wholly distinct from the hasty letter which I am now obliged to write ; on which account it is that I shall forbear to enter at present upon the series of letters which I have promised, even if I should find that my time were not exhausted by the answers to your *two questions below*.

To your first question,—whether to you, with your purposes and at your age of thirty-two, a residence at either of our English universities—or at any foreign university, can

be of much service?—my answer is firmly and unhesitatingly—no. The majority of the under-graduates of your own standing in an academic sense will be your juniors by twelve or fourteen years; a disparity of age which could not but make your society mutually burthensome. What then is it, that you would seek in a university? Lectures? These, whether public or private, are surely the very worst modes of acquiring any sort of accurate knowledge; and are just as much inferior to a good book on the same subject, as that book hastily read aloud, and then immediately withdrawn, would be inferior to the same book left in your possession, and open at any hour to be consulted, retraced, collated, and in the fullest sense studied. But, besides this, university lectures are naturally adapted not so much to the general purpose of communicating knowledge, as to the specific purpose of meeting a particular form of examination for degrees, and a particular profession to which the whole course of the education is known to be directed. The two single advantages which lectures can ever acquire to balance those which they

forego—are either, *first*, the obvious one of a better apparatus for displaying illustrative experiments than most students can command; and the cases where this becomes of importance it cannot be necessary to mention: *second*, the advantage of a rhetorical delivery, when *that* is of any use (as in lectures on poetry, &c.) These, however, are advantages more easily commanded in a great capital than in the most splendid university. What then remains to a university, except its libraries? And with regard to those the answer is short: to the greatest of them under-graduates have not free access: to the inferior ones (of their own college, &c.) the libraries of the great capitals are often equal or superior: and for mere purposes of study your own private library is far preferable to the Bodleian or the Vatican. To you, therefore, a university can offer no attraction except on the assumption that you see cause to adopt a profession: and, as a degree from some university would in that case be useful (and indispensable, except for the bar), your determination on this first question must still be dependent on that which you form upon the second.

In this second question you call for my opinion upon the 11th chapter of Mr. Coleridge's *Biographia Literaria*, as applied to the circumstances in which you yourself are placed. This chapter, to express its substance in the most general terms, is a dissuasion from what Herder, in a passage there quoted, calls "Die Autherschaft;" or, as Mr. Coleridge expresses it, "the trade of authorship:" and the amount of the advice is—that, for the sake of his own happiness and respectability, every man should adopt some trade or profession—and should make literature a subordinate pursuit. On this advice, I understand you to ask, *first*, whether it is naturally to be interpreted, as extending to cases such as yours; and *second*, if so, what is my judgment on such advice so extended? As to my judgment upon this advice, supposing it addressed to men of your age and situation, you will easily collect from all which I shall say—that I think it as bad as can well be given.

Waiving this, however, and to consider your other question—in what sense, and with what restrictions the whole chapter is to be inter-

puted; that is a point which I find it no easy matter to settle. Mr. Coleridge, who does not usually offend by laxity and indecision of purpose, has in this instance allowed the very objects of his advice to shift and fluctuate before him; and from the beginning to the end, nothing is firmly constructed for the apprehension to grasp, nor are the grounds of judgment steadily maintained. From the title of the chapter (an affectionate exhortation to those who in early life feel themselves disposed to become authors), and from the express words of Herder, in the passage cited from him as the final words of the chapter, which words discountenance "authorship" only as "zu früh oder unmässig gebraucht" (practised too early, or with too little temperance), it would have been a natural presumption that Mr. Coleridge's counsels regarded chiefly or altogether the case of very youthful authors, and the unfortunate thirst for premature distinction. And if this had been the purpose of the chapter, excepting that the evil involved in such a case is not very great, and is generally

intercepted by the difficulties which prevent and over-punished by the mortifications which attend, any such juvenile acts of presumption, there could have been no room for differing with Mr. Coleridge, except upon the propriety of occupying his great powers with topics of such trivial interest. But this, though from the title it naturally should have been, is *not* the evil, or any part of it, which Mr. Coleridge is contemplating. What Mr. Coleridge really has in his view are two most different objections to literature, as the principal pursuit of life; which, as I have said, continually alternate with each other as the objects of his arguments, and sometimes become perplexed together, though incapable of blending into any real coalition. The objections urged are: *first*, To literature considered as a means of livelihood; —as any part of the resources which a man should allow himself to rely on for his current income, or worldly credit, and respectability: here the evils anticipated by Mr. Coleridge are of a high and positive character, and such as tend directly to degrade the character, and indirectly to aggravate some heavy domestic

evils. *Second.* To literature considered as the means of sufficiently occupying the intellect. Here the evil apprehended is an evil of defect; it is alleged that literature is not adequate to the main end of giving due and regular excitement to the mind and the spirits, unless combined with some other summons to mental exercise of periodical recurrence—determined by an overruling cause acting from without—and not dependent therefore on the accidents of individual will, or the caprices of momentary feeling springing out of temper or bodily health. Upon the last objection, as by far the most important in any case, and the only one at all applicable to yours, I would wish to say a word; because my thoughts on that matter are from the abundance of my heart, and drawn up from the very depths of my own experience. If there has ever lived a man who might claim the privilege of speaking with emphasis and authority on this great question—By what means shall a man best support the activity of his own mind in solitude?—I probably am that man; and upon this ground that I have passed more of my

life in absolute and unmitigated solitude, voluntarily, and for intellectual purposes, than any person of my age whom I have ever either met with—heard of—or read of. With such pretensions, what is it that I offer as the result of my experience? and how far does it coincide with the doctrine of Mr. Coleridge? Briefly this: I wholly agree with him that literature, in the proper acceptation of the term, as denoting what is otherwise called *Belles Lettres*, &c., i. e., the most eminent of the fine arts, and so understood therefore as to exclude *all science* whatsoever,—is not, to use a Greek word, *αὐτάρκης*—not self-sufficing: no, not even when the mind is so far advanced that it can bring what have hitherto passed for merely literary or *æsthetic* questions, under the light of philosophic principles: when problems of “taste” have expanded to problems of human nature. And why? Simply for this reason—that our power to exercise the faculties on such subjects is not, as it is on others, in defiance of our own spirits: the difficulties and resistances to our progress in these investigations are not susceptible of minute and equable parti-

tion (as in mathematics); and therefore the movements of the mind cannot be continuous, but are either of necessity tumultuary and *per saltum*, or none at all. When, on the contrary, the difficulty is pretty equally dispersed and broken up into a series of steps, no one of which demands any exertion sensibly more intense than the rest, nothing is required of the student beyond that sort of application and coherent attention which in a sincere student of any standing may be presumed as a habit already and inveterately established. The dilemma therefore to which a student of pure literature is continually reduced,—such a student suppose as the Schlegels, or any other man who has cultivated no acquaintance with the severer sciences,—is this: either he studies literature as a mere man of taste, and perhaps also as a philologer; and in that case his understanding must find a daily want of some masculine exercise to call it out, and give it play; or (which is the rarest thing in the world) having begun to study literature as a philosopher, he seeks to renew that elevated walk of study at all opportunities: but this is often as

hopeless an effort as to a great poet it would be to sit down upon any predetermination to compose in his character of poet. Hence, therefore,—if (as too often it happens) he has not cultivated those studies (mathematics, e. g.) which present such difficulties as will bend to a resolute effort of the mind, and which have the additional recommendation that they are apt to stimulate and irritate the mind to make that effort; he is often thrown by the very cravings of an unsatisfied intellect, and not by passion or inclination, upon some vulgar excitement of business or pleasure, which becomes constantly more necessary to him. I should do injustice to myself, if I were to say—that I owed this view of the case solely to my own experience; the truth is—I easily foresaw, upon the suggestion almost of an instant, that literature would not suffice for my mind with my purposes. I foresaw this; and I provided for it from the very first: but how? *Not* in the way recommended by Mr. Coleridge, but according to a plan which you will collect from the letters I am to write; and which therefore I need not here anticipate. What,

however, you will say (for *that* is the main inquiry), what has been the success? has it warranted me to look back upon my past life, and to pronounce it upon the whole a happy one? I answer in calmness and with sincerity of heart—Yes. To you with your knowledge of life I need not say that it is a vain thing for any man to hope that he can arrive at my age without many troubles—every man has his own; and more especially he who has not insulated himself in this world, but has formed attachments and connexions, and has thus multiplied the avenues through which his peace is assailable. But setting aside these inevitable deductions, I assure you, that the great account of my days, if summed up, would present a great overbalance of happiness; and of happiness during those years which I lived in solitude, of necessity derived exclusively from intellectual sources: such an evil indeed as time hanging heavy on my hands, I never experienced for a moment. On the other hand, to illustrate the benefits of my plan by a picture of the very opposite plan, though pursued under the most splendid advantages, I would

direct your eyes to the case of an eminent living Englishman, with talents of the first order, and yet upon the evidence of all his works, ill satisfied at any time either with himself or those of his own age. This Englishman set out in life, as I conjecture, with a plan of study modelled upon that of Leibnitz—that is to say, he designed to make himself (as Leibnitz most truly was) a *Polyhistor* or Catholic student. For this reason, and because at a very early age I had become familiar with the writings of Leibnitz, I have been often tempted to draw a parallel between that eminent German, and the no less eminent Englishman of whom I speak. In many things they agreed : these I shall notice at some other opportunity : only in general I will say that as both had minds not merely powerful, but distinguished for variety and compass of power, so in both were these fine endowments completed and accomplished for works of Herculean endurance and continuity, by the alliance of a bodily constitution resembling that of horses. They were Centaurs : heroic intellects with brutal capacities of body. What

partiality in nature! In general a man has reason to think himself well off in the great lottery of this life if he draws the prize of a healthy stomach without a mind, or the prize of a fine intellect with a crazy stomach: but that any man should draw both, is truly astonishing: and I suppose happens only once in a century. Thus far (as indeed much farther) they agreed: the points of difference were many, and not less remarkable: two I shall allege as pertinent to the matter before me. First, I remarked that Leibnitz, however anxious to throw out his mind upon the whole encyclopædia of human research, yet did not forget to pay the price at which only any *right* to be thus discursive can be earned: he sacrificed to the austerer muses: knowing that God geometrizes eternally, he rightly supposed that in the universal temple Mathesis must furnish the master key which would open most shrines. The Englishman, on the contrary, I remarked to have been too self-indulgent and almost a voluptuary in his studies; sparing himself all toil, and thinking apparently to evade the necessity of artificial power by an ex-

traordinary exertion of his own native power. Neither as a boy, nor as a man, had he submitted to any regular study or discipline of thought: his choice of subjects had lain too much amongst those dependent upon politics or other fleeting interests; and when this had not happened, yet never amongst those which admitted of *continuous* thinking and study, and which support the spirits by perpetual influxes of pleasure, from the constant sense of success and difficulty overcome. As to the use of books, the German had been a discursive reader: the Englishman a desultory reader. Secondly, I remarked that Leibnitz was always cheerful and obliging; most courteous and communicative to his fellow-labourers in literature or science; with a single exception (which rests, I think, as the sole stain upon his memory) just, and even generously just to the claims of others: uncensorious, and yet patient of censure; willing to teach, and most willing to be taught. Our English contemporary was not, I think, naturally less amiable than Leibnitz: and therefore I ascribe it to his unfortunate plan of study, leaving him of

necessity too often with no subjects for intellectual exertion, but such as cannot be pursued successfully, unless in a state of genial spirits, —that we find him continually in ill humour, distempered and untuned with uncharitable feelings; directing too harsh and acrimonious a spirit of criticism always against the age in which he lives, sometimes even against individuals; querulous (Note A) under criticism, almost to the extent of believing himself the object of conspiracies and organized persecution: finally (which to me is far the gloomiest part of the picture) he neither will consent to believe that any man of his own age (at least of his own country) can teach *him* any thing—professing all his obligations to those *who are dead*, or else to some rusty old German; nor finally will he consent to teach others, with the simple-minded magnanimity of a scholar, who should not seek to mystify and perplex his pupil; or to illuminate only with half-lights: nor put himself on his guard against his reader, as against a person seeking to grow as knowing as himself. On the contrary, who should rejoice to believe (if he could believe it) that

all the world knew as much as himself; and should adopt as his motto (which I make it my pride to have done, from my earliest days) the simple grandeur of that line in Chaucer's description of *his* scholar—

“That gladly would he learn—and gladly teach.”

Such were the two features of difference which I had occasion perpetually to remark—between two great scholars, in many other features so closely resembling each other. In general these two features would be thought to exist independently; but, with my previous theory of the necessity in all cases that, with studies of so uncertain and even morbid an effect upon the spirits as literature, should be combined some analytic exercise of *inevitable* healthy action, in this respect it was natural that I should connect them in my mind as cause and effect; and, in that view, they gave a double attestation to Mr. Coleridge's advice where it agrees with mine—and to mine where it differs from his.

Thus far I have considered Mr. Coleridge's advice simply as it respects the student. But

the object of his studies is also entitled to some consideration: if it were better for the literary body, that all should pursue a profession as their *ἐργον*, (or business) and literature as a *παρεργον* (an accessory or mere by-business),—how far is literature itself likely to benefit by such an arrangement? Mr. Coleridge insists upon it that it will: and at page 225 he alleges seven names, to which at page 233 he adds an eighth, of celebrated men who have shown “the possibility of combining weighty performances in literature, with full and independent employment:” on various grounds it would be easy, I think, to cut down the list, as a list any way favourable for Mr. Coleridge’s purpose, to one name—viz. that of Lord Bacon. But waiving his examples, let us consider his arguments. The main business, the *ἐργον*, after exhausting a man’s powers during the day, is supposed to leave three hours at night for the *παρεργον*. Now we are to consider that our bright ideal of a literatus may chance to be married: in fact, Mr. Coleridge agrees to allow him a wife: let us suppose a wife therefore; and the more so,

because else he will perhaps take one without our permission. I ask then what portion of these three hours is our student to give up to the pleasure of his wife's society? For, if a man finds pleasure in his wife's company at any time, I take it for granted that he would wish to spend the evening with her. Well, if you think so (says Mr. Coleridge, in effect, who had at first supposed the learned man to "retire into his study") in fact, he need *not* retire. How then? Why, he is to study, not in his study—but ~~in~~ his drawing-room, whilst "the social silence, or undisturbing voices of a wife or sister, will be like a restorative atmosphere." Silence, by the way, is a strange mode of social pleasure. I know not what Mr. Coleridge does when he sits with a young woman: for my part, I do "mon possible" to entertain her both with my wit and my wisdom; and am happy to hear *her* talk even though she should chance to be my own wife; and never think of tolerating silence for one instant. But, not to quarrel about tastes, what is this "sister" that so pleasantly intrudes herself into the party? The wife, I understand;

but, in the north of England, or any place where I have lived, wives do not commonly present men with sisters, but with children. Suppose then our student's wife should give him a son ; or, what is noisier, a daughter ; or, what is noisier than either—both ? What's to be done then ? Here's a worshipful audience for a philosopher ; here's a promising company for "undisturbing voices," and "social silence." I admire Mr. Coleridge's way of blinking this question, of masking this youthful battery with "a sister." Children, *however*, are incidents that do and will occur in this life ; and must not be blinked. I have seen the case again and again ; and I say it, and say it with pain, that there is no more respect for philosophy amongst that lively part of society than Mr. Coleridge and I have for French Philosophy. They may, however, be banished to their nursery : true, but if they are ever admitted to the drawing-room, in houses where not much company is kept, I observe that this visit is most interesting to all parties in the evening ; and, if they would otherwise be admitted, no good-natured student would wish to have their ex-

pulsion charged upon his books. After all, however, it is clear that Mr. Coleridge's voice is for the "retiring" system: and he gives us pretty plainly to understand (p. 230) that it is far better for men to be separated from their wives throughout the day. But in saying this, he forgets that in the case under consideration, the question is not so properly whether they are ever to be separated—as whether they are ever to meet. Indeed, taking what Mr. Coleridge says on this subject as addressed to literary men especially, I know not why they should be supposed likely to make unhappy marriages more than other men. They are not called upon to pass more of their time with their wives than country gentlemen, or men generally without a profession. On the other hand, if we are to understand the words of Mr. Coleridge as of universal application, I hope that he gives us a very unfair view of the average tenour of life in this important particular. Yet, if it be settled that men will quarrel, and must quarrel with their wives, or their wives with them, unless separated,—would not a large screen meet the emergency? Or might

not the learned man, as soon as breakfast is ended, bow to his wife—and withdraw to his library; where he might study or be sulky, according to his taste; leaving her for the rest of the day to amuse or to employ herself in the way most agreeable to her sex, rank, and previous education? But, in whatever way this difficulty may be disposed of, one point is clear to my judgment: that literature must decay, unless we have a class *wholly* dedicated to that service, not pursuing it as an amusement only with wearied and pre-occupied minds. The reproach of being a “*nation boutiquière*” now so eminently inapplicable to the English, would become indeed just, and in the most unfortunate sense just, if from all our overstocked trades and professions we could not spare men enough to compose a garrison on permanent duty for the service of the highest purposes which grace and dignify our nature.

You will not infer from all this any abatement in my old respect for Mr. Coleridge’s great and various powers: no man admires

them more. But there is no treason, I hope, in starting a little game now and then from the thickets of *The Friend*, the *Biographia Literaria*, or even from Mr. Coleridge's *Sermons*, considering that they are *Lay* ones. Young men must have some exercise this frosty weather. Hereafter I shall have occasion to break a lance with Mr. Coleridge on more difficult questions : and very happy I shall be, if the amusement which I shall make it my business to strike out, by my hammering, from the flinty rock of his metaphysics, should either tempt any one to look into his valuable writings—or should tempt Mr. Coleridge to sally out of his hiding-place in a philosophic passion, and to attack me with the same freedom. Such an exhibition must be amusing to the public. I conceive that two transcendentalists, who are also two ——s, can hardly ever before have stripped in any ring. But, by the way, I wish he would leave transcendentalism to me and other young men : for, to say the truth, it does not prosper in his hands. I will take charge of the public principles in that point : and he will thus be more

at leisure to give us another *Ancient Mariner* ; which, I will answer for it, the whole literary body would receive with gratitude and a fervent "plaudite."

Yours, most faithfully,

X. Y. Z.

December 24.

LETTER II.

Outline of the Work.—Notice of former Writers on the same subject.

MY DEAR M——,

In this, my second and last letter of preface, I shall settle the idea and the arrangement of my papers: there will be in all about seven, of which four will exhibit the material on which the student is to work; the other three, the tools with which the workmanship is to be conducted. First, *what* is to be done; and secondly, *how* is the natural and obvious distribution of the work: that is to say, the business is to assign, first, the end, and, secondly, the means. And, because the end should reasonably determine the means, it would seem natural that in the arrangement of the work, all which relates to *that* should have precedency. Nevertheless, I mean to invert this order; and for the following reason: all that part of the means, which

are so entirely determined by the end as to presuppose its full and circumstantial development, may be concluded specially restricted to that individual end; in proportion to this restriction they will, therefore, be of narrow application, and are best treated in direct connexion and concurrently with the object to which they are thus appropriated. On the other hand, those means or instruments of thought, which are sufficiently complex and important to claim a separate attention to themselves, are usually of such large and extensive use, that they belong indifferently to all schemes of study, and may safely be premised in any plan, however novel in its principles, or peculiar in its tendencies. What are these general instruments of study? According to my view they are three; first, Logic; secondly, Languages; thirdly, Arts of Memory. With respect to these, it is not necessary that any special end should be previously given: be his end what it may, every student must have thoughts to arrange, knowledge to transplant, and facts to record. Means, which are thus universally requisite, may safely have pre-

cedency of the end: and it will not be a preposterous order, if I dedicate my first three letters to the several subjects of Logic, Languages, and Arts of Memory; which will compose one half of my scheme: leaving to the other half, the task of unfolding the course of study for which these instruments will be available. Having thus settled the arrangement, and implicitly, therefore, settled in part the idea or *ratio* of my scheme,—I shall go on to add what may be necessary to confine your expectations to the right track, and prevent them from going above or below the true character of the mark I aim at. I profess then to attempt something much higher than merely directions for a course of reading. Not that such a work might not be of eminent service; and in particular at this time, and with a constant adaptation to the case of rich men, not literary, I am of opinion, that no more useful book could be executed than a series of letters (addressed, for example, to country gentlemen, merchants, &c.) on the formation of a library. The uses of such a treatise, however, are not those which I contemplate; for either it would presume and

refer to a plan of study already settled ; and in that light, it is a mere complement of the plan I propose to execute : or else it would attempt to *involve* a plan of study in the course of reading suggested ; and *that* would be neither more nor less than to do *in concreto*, what it is far more convenient as well as more philosophical to do (as I am now going to do) directly and *in abstracto*. A mere course of reading, therefore, is much below what I propose ; on the other hand, an organon of the human understanding is as much above it : such a work is a labour for a life : that is to say, though it may take up but a small part of every day, yet could it in no other way accumulate its materials, than by keeping the mind everlastingly on the watch to seize upon such notices as may arise daily throughout a life under the favour of accident or occasion. Forty years are not too large a period for such a work ; and my présent work, however maturely meditated, must be executed with rapidity. Here, in fact, I do but sketch or trace in outline (ὡς ἐν τυπῷ περιλαβεῖν), what there it would become my duty to develop, to fill up in detail, to apply, and to

illustrate on the most extensive scale. After having attempted in my first part to put you in possession of the best method for acquiring the *instruments* of study; and with respect to logic in particular, having directed a philosophic light upon its true meaning and purpose—with the hope of extinguishing that anarchy of errors which have possessed this ground from the time of Lord Bacon to the moment at which I write,—I then, in the second division, address myself to the question of *ends*. Upon which word let me distinguish: upon ends, in an absolute sense, as ultimate ends, it is presumption in any man to offer counsel to another of mature age. Advice of that sort, given under whatever hollow pretences of kindness, is to be looked upon as arrogance in the most repulsive shape; and to be rejected with that sort of summary disdain, which any man not of servile nature would testify towards him who should attempt to influence his choice of a wife. A student of mature age must be presumed to be best acquainted with his own talents, and his own intellectual infirmities, with his “forte” and his “foible,” with his own former experi-

ence of failure or success, and with the direction in which his inclinations point. Far be it from me to violate by the spirit of my counsels a pride so reasonable, which, in truth, I hold sacred. My scheme takes an humbler ground. *Ends* indeed, in a secondary sense, the latter half professes to deal with: but such ends as, though bearing that character, in relation to what is purely and merely instrumental, yet again become *means* in relation to ends absolutely so called. The *final* application of your powers and knowledge it is for yourself only to determine: my pretensions in regard to that election are limited to this—that I profess to place you on a vantage ground from which you may determine more wisely, by determining from a higher point of survey. My purpose is not to map the whole course of your journey, but to serve as your guide to that station, at which you may be able to lay down your future route for yourself. The former half of my work I have already described to you: the latter half endeavours to construct such a system of study as shall combine these two advantages—1. Systematic unity; i. e. such a principle of

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internal connexion, as that the several parts of the plan shall furnish assistance interchangeably: 2. The largest possible compass of *external* relations. Some empires, you know, are built for growth: others are essentially impro-
gressive, but are built for duration, on some principle of strong internal cohesion. Systems of knowledge, however, and schemes of study, should propose both ends:—they should take their foundations broad and deep,

And lay great bases for eternity:

which is the surest key to internal and systematic connexion: and, secondly, they should provide for future growth and accretion; regarding all knowledge as a nucleus and centre of accumulation for other knowledge. It is on this latter principle, by the way, that the system of education in our public schools, however otherwise defective, is justly held superior to the specious novelties of our suburban academies; for it is more radical, and adapted to a larger superstructure. Such, I say, is the character of my scheme; and by the very act of claiming for it, as one of its benefits, that it leaves you

in the *centre* of large and comprehensive relations to other parts of knowledge; it is pretty apparent that I do not presume to suggest in what direction of these manifold relations you should afterwards advance; *that*, as I have now sufficiently explained, will be left to your own self-knowledge; but to your self-knowledge illumined at the point where I leave you by that other knowledge which my scheme of study professes to communicate.

From this general outline of my own plan, I am led by an easy transition to a question of yours, respecting the merits of the most celebrated amongst those who have trod the same ground in past times. Excepting only a little treatise of Erasmus, *de Ratione Studii*, all the essays on this subject by eminent Continental writers appeared in the 17th century; and of these, a large majority before the year 1640. They were universally written in Latin; and, the Latin of that age being good, they are so far agreeable to read; beyond this, and the praise of elegance in their composition and arrangement, I have not much to say in their behalf. About the year 1645, Lewis Elzevir published

a *corpus* of these essays, amounting in all to four-and-twenty; in point of elegance and good sense, their merits are various; thus far they differ: but, in regard to the main point, they hold a lamentable equality of pretension—being all thoroughly hollow and barren of any practical use. (Note B.) I cannot give you a better notion of their true place and relation to the class of works of which you are in search of, than by an analogy drawn from the idea of didactic poetry, as it exists in the Roman literature and our own. So thoroughly is this sometimes misunderstood, that I have seen it insisted on as a merit in a didactic poem—that the art, which it professed to deliver, might be learned and practised in all its technicalities, without other assistance than that which the poem supplied. But, had this been true,—so far from being a praise, it would instantly have degraded the poem from its rank as a work among the products of Fine Arts: *ipso facto*, such a poem would have settled down from that high intellectual rank into the ignoble pretensions of mechanic art, in which the metre, and the style which metre introduces, would imme-

diately have lost their justification. The true idea of didactic poetry is this ; either the poet selects an art which furnishes the *occasion* for a series of picturesque exhibitions (as Virgil, Dyer, &c.): and, in that case, it is true that he derives part of his power from the art which he delivers ; not, however, from what is essential to the art, but from its accidents and adjuncts. Either he does this ; or else (as is the case with Lord Roscommon, Pope, &c.) so far from seeking in his subject for any part of the *power*, he seeks in *that* only for the *resistance* with which he contends by means of the power derived from the verse and the artifices of style. To one case or other of this alternative all didactic poems are reducible ; and, allowing for the differences of rhetoric and poetry, the same ideal must have presided in the composition of the various essays of the 17th century, addressed to students : the subject was felt to be austere and unattractive, and almost purely scholastic ; it was the ambition of the writers, therefore, to show that they could present it in a graceful shape : and that under their treatment, the subject might become interesting to

the reader, as an arena, upon which skill was exhibited, baffling or evading difficulties,—even at the price of all benefit to the anxious and earnest disciple. *'Spartam nactus es*, was their motto, *hanc exorna*; and like Cicero, in his Idea of an Orator, with relation to the practical duties of the forum; or Lord Shaftesbury, with relation to the accurate knowledge of the academic philosophy; they must be supposed deliberately to have made a *selection* from the arts or doctrines before them, for the sake of a beautiful composition which should preserve all its parts in harmony, and only secondarily (if at all) to have regarded the interests of the student. By all of them the invitation held out was not so much *Indocti discant*, as *Ament meminisse periti*.

In our own country there have been numerous “letters,” &c. on this interesting subject; but not one that has laid any hold on the public mind, except the two works of Dr. Watt’s, especially that upon the “Improvement of the Mind.” Being the most imbecile of books, it must have owed its success, 1. To the sectarian zeal of his party in religion—his fellows

and his followers : 2. To the fact of its having gained for its author, from two Scotch universities, the highest degree they could bestow : 3. To the distinguished honour of having been adopted as a lecture book (q. as an examination book?) by both English universities : 4. To the extravagant praise of Dr. Johnson, amongst whose infirmities it was to praise warmly, when he was flattered by the sense of his own great superiority in powers and knowledge. Dr. Johnson supposes it to have been modelled on Locke's *Conduct of the Understanding*; but surely this is as ludicrous as to charge, upon Silence, any elaborate imitation of Mr. Justice Shallow. That Silence may have borrowed from another man half of a joke, or echoed the roar of his laughter, is possible; but of any more grave or laborious attempts to rob he stands ludicrously acquitted by the exemplary imbecility of his nature. No: Dr. Watts did *not* steal from Mr. Locke: in matters of dulness a man is easily original: and I suppose that even Feeble or Shallow might have had credit for the effort necessary to the following coun-

sels, taken at random from Dr. Watts, at the page where the book has happened to fall open.

1. Get a distinct and comprehensive knowledge of the subject which you treat of; survey it on all sides, and make yourself perfect master of it: then (then! what then?—Think of Feeble making an inference. Well, “then,”) you will have all the sentiments that relate to it in your view: 2. Be well skilled in the language which you speak: 3. Acquire a variety of words, a *copia verborum*. Let your memory be rich in synonymous terms, p. 228, edit. 1817.

Well done, most magnanimous Feeble.—Such counsels, I suppose that any man might have produced; and you will not wish to see criticised. Let me rather inquire, what common defect it is which has made the works of much more ingenious men, and in particular that of Locke, utterly useless for the end proposed. The error in these books is the same which occurs in books of ethics, and which has made them more or less useless for any practical purpose. As it is important to put an end to all delusion in matters of such grave and

general concern as the improvement of our understandings, or the moral valuation of actions; and as I repeat that the delusion here alluded to has affected both equally (so far as they can be affected by the books written professedly to assist them), it may be worth while to spend a few lines in exposing it. I believe that you are so far acquainted with the structure of a syllogism as to know how to distinguish between the major and minor proposition: there is, indeed, a technical rule which makes it impossible to err; but you will have no need of *that*, if you once apprehend the *rationale* of a syllogism in the light under which I will here place it. In every syllogism one of the two premises (the major) lays down a rule, under which rule the other (the minor) brings the subject of your argument as a particular case. The minor is, therefore, distinguished from the major by an act of the *judgment*, *viz.*: a subsumption of a special case under a rule. Now consider how this applies to morals: here the conscience supplies the general rule, or major proposition; and about this there is no question; but to bring the special case of conduct, which

is the subject of your inquiry, under this general rule—here first commences the difficulty ; and just upon this point are ethical treatises for the most part silent. Accordingly no man thinks of consulting them for his direction under any moral perplexities ; if he reads them at all, it is for the gratification of his understanding in surveying the order and relation amongst the several members of a system ; never for the information of his moral judgment.

For any practical use in that way, a *casuistry*, *i. e.* a subsumption of the *cases* most frequently recurring in ordinary life, should be combined (Note C) with the system of moral principles ;—the latter supplying the major (or normal) proposition ; the former supplying the minor proposition, which brings the special case under the rule. With the help of this explanation, you will easily understand on what principle I venture to denounce, as unprofitable, the whole class of books written on the model of Locke's *Conduct of the Understanding*. According to Locke, the student is not to hurry, but again not to loiter ; not to be too precipitate, nor yet too hesitating ; not to be too confiding, but far

less too suspicious ; not too obstinate in his own opinions, yet again (for the love of God !) not too resigned to those of others ; not too general in his divisions, but (as he regards his own soul) not too minute, &c. &c. &c.

But surely no man, bent on the improvement of his faculties, was ever guilty of these errors under these names ; that is, knowingly and deliberately. If he is so at all, it is either that he has not reflected on his own method ; or that, having done so, he has allowed himself, in the act or habit offending these rules on a false view of its tendency and character ; because, in fact, having adopted as his rule (or major) that very golden mean which Mr. Locke recommends, and which, without Mr. Locke's suggestion he would have adopted for himself ;—it has yet been possible for him by an erroneous judgment, to take up an act or habit under the rule—which with better advice he would have excluded ; which advice is exactly what Mr. Locke has—*not* given. Over and above all this the method of the book is aphoristic ; and, as might be expected from that method, without a plan ; and, which is

partly the cause and partly the consequence of having a plan, without a foundation. This word *foundation* leads me to one remark suggested by your letter; and with that I shall conclude my own. When I spoke above of the student's taking his foundations broad and deep, I had my eye chiefly on the corner-stones of strong-built knowledge, viz.: on logic; on a proper choice of languages; on a particular part of what is called metaphysics; and on mathematics. Now you allege (I suppose upon occasion of my references to mathematics in my last letter) that you have no "genius" for mathematics; and you speak with the usual awe (*pavor attonitorum*) of the supposed "profundity" of intellect necessary to a great progress in this direction. Be assured that you are in utter error; though it be an error all but universal. In mathematics, upon two irresistible arguments which I shall set in a clear light, when I come to explain the procedure of the mind with regard to that sort of evidence, and that sort of investigation, there can be no subtlety: all minds are levelled except as to the rapidity of the course; and, from the entire

absence of all those acts of mind which do really imply profundity of intellect, it is a question whether an idiot might not be made an excellent mathematician. Listen not to the romantic notions of the world on this subject; above all listen not to mathematicians. Mathematicians, *as mathematicians*, have no business with the question. It is one thing to understand mathematics; another and far different to understand the philosophy of mathematics. With respect to this, it is memorable, that in no one of the great philosophical questions which the ascent of mathematics has from time to time brought up above the horizon of our speculative view, has any mathematician who was merely such (however eminent) had depth of intellect adequate to its solution: without insisting on the absurdities published by mathematicians, on the philosophy of the *infinite*, since that notion was introduced into mathematics; or on the fruitless attempts of all but a metaphysician to settle the strife between the conflicting modes of valuing *living forces*;—I need only ask what English or French mathematician has been able to exhibit the notion of

negative quantities, in a theory enduring even to a popular philosophy, or which has commanded any assent? Or again, what Algebra is there existing which does not contain a false and ludicrous account of the procedure in that science, as contrasted with the procedure in geometry? But, not to trouble you with more of these cases so opprobrious to mathematicians, lay this to heart, that mathematics are very easy and very important; they are, in fact, the organ of one large division of human knowledge. And, as it is of consequence that you should lose no time by waiting for my letter on that subject, let me forestal so much of it—as to advise that you would immediately commence with Euclid; reading those eight books of the Elements which are usually read, and the Data. If you should go no farther, so much geometry will be useful and delightful: and so much, by reading for two hours a-day, you will easily accomplish in about thirteen weeks, *i. e.* one quarter of a year.

Yours, most truly,

X. Y. Z.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR SIR,

In my three following letters I am to consider, 1st, Languages, 2d, Logic; Arts of Memory; not as parts of knowledge sought or valued on their own account, but simply as the most general amongst the means and instruments of the student, estimated therefore with a reference to the number and importance of the *ends* which they further, and fairly to be presumed in all schemes of self-improvement liberally planned. In this letter I will speak of languages; my thoughts, and a twenty years' experience as a student, having furnished me with some hints that may be useful, in determining your choice, where choice is at first sight so difficult, and the evils of an erroneous choice so great. On this Babel of an earth which you and I inhabit, there are said to be about three thousand languages and jargons. Of

nearly five hundred, you will find a specimen in the Mithridates of Adelung, and in some other German works of more moderate bulk (Note D). The final purposes of this vast engine for separating nations, it is not difficult in part to perceive ; and it is presumable that these purposes have been nearly fulfilled ; since there can be little doubt that within the next two centuries, all the barbarous languages of the earth (i. e. those without a literature) will be one after one strangled and exterminated by four European languages, viz. the English, the Spanish, the Portuguese, and the Russian. Central Africa, and *that* only, can resist the momentum of civilization for a longer period. Now, languages are sometimes studied, not as a key to so many bodies of literature, but as an object *per se* ; for example, by Sir William Jones, Dr. Leyden, &c. : and where the researches are conducted with the enthusiasm and the sagacity of the late extraordinary Professor of Oriental Languages in Edinburgh, Dr. Alexander Murray, it is impossible to withhold one's admiration ; *he* had a theory, and distinct purposes, which shed light upon his paths that are else

“as dark as Erebus.” Such labours conducted in such a spirit must be important, if the eldest records of the human race be important; for the affinities of language furnish the main clue for ascending, through the labyrinths of nations,—to their earliest origins and connexions. To a professed linguist, therefore, the natural advice would be—examine the structure of as many languages as possible; gather as many thousand specimens as possible into your *hortus siccus*; beginning with the eldest forms of the Teutonic, viz.: the Visigothic and the Icelandic, for which the aids rendered by modern learning are immense. To a professed philologist, I say, the natural advice would be this. But to you, who have no such purposes, and whom I suppose to wish for languages simply as avenues to literature not otherwise accessible, I will frankly say—start from this principle—that the act of learning a language is in itself an evil; and so frame your selection of languages, that the largest possible body of literature *available for your purposes* shall be laid open to you at the least possible price of time and mental energy squandered in

this direction. I say this with some earnestness. For I will not conceal from you, that one of the habits most unfavourable to the growth and sincere culture of the intellect in our day is the facility with which men surrender themselves to the barren and ungenial labour of language learning. Unless balanced by studies that give more exercise, more excitement, and more aliment to the faculties, I am convinced, by all I have observed, that this practice is the dry rot of the human mind. How should it be otherwise? The act of learning a science is good, not only for the knowledge which results, but for the exercise which attends it: the energies which the learner is obliged to put forth, are true intellectual energies: and his very errors are full of instruction. He fails to construct some leading idea; or he even misconstrues it: he places himself in a false position with respect to certain propositions; views them from a false centre; makes a false or an imperfect antithesis; apprehends a definition with insufficient rigour; or fails in his use of it to keep it self-consistent. These and a thousand other errors are met by

a thousand appropriate resources—all of a true intellectual character ; comparing, combining, distinguishing, generalizing, subdividing, acts of abstraction and evolution, of synthesis and analysis, until the most torpid minds are ventilated, and healthily excited by this introversion of the faculties upon themselves. But in the study of language (with an exception, however, to a certain extent, in favour of Latin and Greek, which I shall notice hereafter), nothing of all this can take place, and for one simple reason—that all is arbitrary. Wherever there is a law and system—wherever there is relation and correspondence of parts, the intellect will make its way ; will interfuse amongst the dry bones the blood and pulses of life, and create “ a soul under the ribs of death.” But whatsoever is arbitrary and conventional, which yields no reason why it should be this way rather than that, obeying no theory or law, must, by its lifeless forms, kill and mortify the action of the intellect. If this be true, it becomes every student to keep watch upon himself, that he does not upon any light temptation allow himself an overbalance of study in

this direction. For the temptations to such an excess, which in our days are more powerful than formerly, are at all times too powerful. Of all the weapons in the armoury of the scholar, none is so showy or so captivating to common-place minds as skill in languages. *Vanity* is, therefore, one cause of the undue application to languages. A second is—the national *fashion*. What nation but ourselves ever made the language of its eternal enemy an essential part of even a decent (Note E) education? What should we think of Roman policy, if, during the second Punic war, the Carthaginian language had been taught as a matter of course to the children of every Roman citizen? But a third cause, which I believe has more efficacy than either of the former, is mere *levity*; the simple fact of being unballasted by any sufficient weight of plan or settled purpose, to present a counterpoise to the slightest momentum this way or that, arising from any impulse of accident or personal caprice. When there is no resistance, a breath of air will be sufficient to determine the motion. I remember once, that happening to spend an autumn

in Ilfracombe, on the west coast of Devonshire—I found all the young ladies whom I knew, busily employed on the study of Marine Botany: on the opposite shore of the channel, in all the South Welch ports of Tenby, &c. they were no less busy upon Conchology; in neither case from any previous love of the science, but simply availing themselves of their local advantages. Now, here a man must have been truly ill-natured to laugh. For the studies were in both instances beautiful: a love for it was created, if it had not pre-existed: and to women, and young women, the very absence of all austere unity of purpose and self-determination was becoming and graceful. Yet, when this same levity and liability to casual impulses come forward in the acts and purposes of a man, I must own, that I have often been unable to check myself in something like a contemptuous feeling: nor should I wish to check myself, but for remembering how many men of energetic minds constantly give way to slight and inadequate motives, simply for want of being summoned to any anxious reviews of their own conduct.

How many cases have I known where a particular study, as, suppose, of the Hartleian philosophy, was pursued throughout a whole college,—simply because a man of talents had talked of it in the junior common-room: how many, where a book became popular, because it had been mentioned in the House of Commons: how many, where a man resolved to learn Welch, because he was spending a month or two at Barmouth,—or Italian, because he had found a Milan series of the poets in his aunt's library,—or the violin, because he had bought a fine one at an auction.

In 1808-9, you must well remember what a strong impulse the opening of the Peninsular War communicated to our current literature: the presses of London and the provinces teemed with editions of Spanish books, dictionaries, and grammars: and the motions of the British armies were accompanied by a corresponding activity among British composers. From the just interest which is now renewed in Spanish affairs, I suppose something of the same scene will recur. Now, for my own part, though undoubtedly I would, for the sake of Calderon

alone (judging of him through a German translation), most willingly study the Spanish literature (if I had leisure); yet I should be ashamed to do so upon the irrelevant and *occasional* summons of an interesting situation in Spanish affairs. I should feel that by such an act I confessed a want of pre-occupation in my mind—a want of self-origination in my plans—an inertness of will, which, above all things, I do and ought to detest. If it were right for me (right I mean in relation to my previous scheme of study) to have dedicated a portion of my life to the Spanish literature, it must have been right before the Spanish politics took an interesting aspect: if it were not right, it could not become so upon a suggestion so purely verbal as the recurrence of the word Spanish in the London journals.

This, I am sure, you will interpret candidly. I am not supposing you less furnished with powers of self-determination than myself. I have no personal allusion or exception: but I suppose every man liable to be acted on unduly, or by inadequate impulses, so long as he is not possessed by some plan that may steady that

levity of nature which is implied in the mere state of indifference to all settled plans. This levity in our days, meets with an accidental ally in the extraordinary facilities for studying languages in the shape of elementary books; which facilities of themselves form a fourth cause of the disproportionate study given to languages. But a fifth cause occurs to me, of a less selfish and indolent character than any of the preceding; and as it seems to me hardly possible that it should not influence you more or less to make your choice of languages too large and comprehensive, I shall tell you from my own case, what may be sufficient to set you on your guard against too much indulgence to a feeling in itself just and natural. In my youthful days I never entered a great library, suppose of 100,000 volumes, but my predominant feeling was one of pain and disturbance of mind—not much unlike that which drew tears from Xerxes, on viewing his immense army, and reflecting that in 100 years not one soul would remain alive. To me, with respect to the books, the same effect would be brought about by my own death. Here, said I, are

100,000 books—the worst of them capable of giving me some pleasure and instruction; and before I can have had time to extract the honey from one-twentieth of this hive, in all likelihood I shall be summoned away. This thought, I am sure, must often have occurred to yourself; and you may judge how much it was aggravated, when I found that, subtracting all merely professional books—books of reference (as dictionaries, &c. &c. &c.)—from the universal library of Europe, there would still remain a total of not less than twelve hundred thousand books over and above what the presses of Europe are still disemboguing into the ocean of literature; many of them immense folios or quartos. Now I had been told by an eminent English author, that with respect to one single work, viz: the History of Thuanus, a calculation had been made by a Portuguese monk, which showed, that barely to read over the words (and allowing no time for reflection) would require three years' labour, at the rate of (I think) three hours a-day. Further, I had myself ascertained, that to read a duodecimo volume in prose, of four hundred pages—all

skipping being barred, and the rapid reading which belongs to the vulgar interest of a novel—was a very sufficient work for one day. Consequently three hundred and sixty-five per annum, that is (with a very small allowance for the claims of life on one's own account, and that of one's friends), one thousand for every triennium—that is, ten thousand for thirty years—will be as much as a man, who lives for that only, can hope to accomplish. From the age of twenty to eighty, therefore, if a man were so unhappy as to live to eighty, the utmost he could hope to travel through would be twenty thousand volumes; a number not, perhaps, above *five per cent.* of what the mere *current* literature of Europe would accumulate in that period of years. Now from this amount of twenty thousand, make a deduction on account of books of larger size—books to be studied—and books to be read slowly, and many times over (as all works in which the composition is a principal part of their pretensions), allow a fair discount for such deductions, and the twenty thousand will, perhaps, shrink to eight or five thousand. All this arithmetical state-

ment you must not conceive to relate to any fanciful case of misery: no, I protest to you, that I speak of as real a case of suffering as ever can have existed. And it soon increased. For the same panic seized upon me with respect to the works of art: I found that I had no chance of hearing the twenty-five thousandth part of the music that had been produced; and so of other arts. Nor was this all. For, happening to say to myself one night as I entered a long street, "I shall never see the one thousandth part of the people who are living in this single street," it occurred to me that every man and woman was a most interesting book, if one knew how to read them. Here opened upon me a new world of misery. For if books and works of art existed by millions, men existed by hundreds of millions. Nay, even if it had been possible for me to know all of my own generation, yet, like Dr. Faustus who desired to see "Helen of Greece," I should still have been dissatisfied; for what was one generation to all that were past? Nay, my madness took yet a higher flight. For I considered that I stood on a little isthmus of time, which con-

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nected the two great worlds—the past and the future. I stood in equal relation to both; I asked for admittance to one as much as to the other. Even if a necromancer could have brought up the great men of the seventeenth century, I should have said, what good does all this do me? where are those of the twentieth century? and so onward! In short, I never turned my thoughts this way, but I fell into a downright midsummer madness; I could not enjoy what I had, craving for that which I had not, and could not have; was thirsty like Tantalus in the midst of waters; even when using my present wealth, thought only of its perishableness; and “wept to have—what I so feared to lose!” But all this, you will say, was by my own admission “madness.” Madness, I grant, but such a madness—not as lunatics suffer—no hallucination of the brain; but a madness like that of misers—the usurpation and despotism of one feeling, natural in itself, but traveling into an excess, which at last upset all which should have balanced it. And I must assert, that with allowance for difference of degrees, no madness is more common. Many

of those who give themselves up to the study of Languages do so under the same disease which I have described ; and, if they do not carry it on to the same extremity of wretchedness, it is because they are not so logical, and so consistent in their madness, as I was. Under our present enormous accumulation of books, I do affirm, that a miserable distraction of choice (which is the germ of such a madness) must be very generally incident to the times ; that the symptoms of it are, in fact, very prevalent ; and that one of the chief symptoms is an enormous “gluttonism” for books, and for adding language to language ; and in this way it is that literature becomes much more a source of torment than of pleasure. Nay, I will go farther, and will say that of many, who escape this disease, some owe their privilege simply to the narrowness of their minds and the contracted range of their sympathies with literature—which, enlarged, they would soon lose it ! others again owe it to their situation ; as, for instance, in a country town, where, books being few, a man can use up all his materials, his appetite is unpalated—and he is grateful for the loan of

a MS. &c.: but bring him up to London—show him the wagon loads of unused stores which he is at liberty to work up—tell him that these even are but a trifle, perhaps, to what he may find in the libraries of Paris, Dresden, Milan, &c.—of religious houses—of English noblemen, &c.; and this same man, who came up to London blithe and happy, will leave it pale and sad. You have ruined his peace of mind: a subject which he fancied himself capable of exhausting, he finds to be a labour for centuries: he has no longer the healthy pleasure of feeling himself master of his materials; he is degraded into their slave. Perhaps I dwell too much on this subject; but allow me, before I leave it, to illustrate what I have said by the case of two eminent literati, who are at this moment exhibiting themselves as a couple of *figurantes* (if I may so say) on the stage of Europe, and who have sacrificed their own happiness and dignity of mind to the very madness I have been describing; or, if not, to the far more selfish passion for notoriety and ostentatious display. The men I mean are F. Bouterwek and Frédéric Schlegel, better

known to the English public as the friend of Madame de Staël. The history of the first is somewhat ludicrous. Coming upon the stage at a time when Kant possessed the national mind of Germany, he thought it would be a good speculation not to fall into the train of the philosopher—but to open a sort of chapel of dissent. He saw no reason why men should not swear by Bouterwek, as well as by Kant; and, connecting this fact with the subsequent confession of Bouterwek, that he was in reality playing off a conscious hoax, it is laughable to mention, that for a time he absolutely found some followers—who worshipped him, but suspiciously and provisionally; unfortunately, however, as he had no leisure or ability to understand Kant, he was obliged to adopt Dr. Priestley's plan of revoking and cancelling in every successive work all his former works as false, pestilent, and heretical. This upset him. The philosopher was unfrocked; and in that line of business he found himself bankrupt. At this crisis things looked ill. However, being young, he pleaded his tender years. George Barnwell and others had been led astray as

well as himself, by keeping bad company : he had now quitted all connection with metaphysics ; and begged to inform the public that he had opened an entirely new concern for criticism in all its branches. He kept his word : he left off hoaxing ; and applied himself to a respectable line of business. The fruits of his labours were a history, in twelve volumes, of modern literature from the end of the thirteenth century. Of this work I have examined all that I pretend to judge of ; viz. the two sections relating to the German and the English literature ; and, not to do him injustice, if it professed to be no more than a bibliographical record of books, it is executed with a very laudable care and fidelity. But imagine to yourself the vast compass of his plan. He professes to give the history of—1. Spanish ; 2. Portuguese ; 3. English ; 4. German ; 5. French ; 6. Italian literature ; no sketch, observe, or abstract of them—but a full and formal history. Conceive, if you can, the monstrous and insane pretensions involved in such a scheme. At starting he had five languages to learn, besides the dialects of his own ; not only so, but five lan-

guages, each through all its varieties for the space of half a millennium: English, for instance, not merely of this day—but the English of Chaucer, of the Metrical Romances; nay, even of Robert of Gloucester, in 1280. Next, the mere printed books (to say nothing of the MSS.) in any one of these languages, to be read and meditated, as they ought to be by an *historian* of the literature, would have found full employment for twelve able-bodied men through an entire life. And after all, when the materials were ready, the work of composition would be still to begin. Such were Bouterwek's pretensions: as to Schlegel's, who, without any more genius or originality, has much more talent; his were still more extravagant,—and were pushed to an extremity that must, I should think, at times disquiet his admirers with a feeling that all is not sound. For, though he did not profess to go so much into detail as Bouterwek, still his abstracts are represented as built on as much reading, though not directly quoted; and to all that Bouterwek held forth in his promises, Schlegel added, as a little *bonus* to his subscribers, 1. Oriental literature; 2.

The Scandinavian literature ; 3. The Provençal literature ; and, for aught I know, a billion of things besides ; to say nothing of an active share in the current literature, as Reviewer, Magaz-
inist, and author of all work. Now the very history of these pretensions exposes their hollowness : to record them is to refute them. Knowing, as we all know, how many years it demands, and by what a leisurely and genial communication with their works it is, that we can gain any deep intimacy with even a few great artists, such as Shakspeare, Milton, or Euripides—how monstrous a fiction would that man force on our credulity who tells us that he has read and weighed in the balances the total products of human intellect dispersed through thirty languages for a period of three thousands years ; and how gross a delusion does *he* practise upon his own mind who can persuade himself that it is *reading* to cram himself with words, the bare sense of which can hardly have time to glance, like the lamps of a mail coach, upon his hurried and bewildered understanding. There is a picture at Oxford, which I saw when a boy, of an old man with

misery in his eye in the act of copying a book ; and the story attached (I forget whether with any historic foundation) is that he was under a vow to copy out some great portion of the Bible before he allowed himself (or was allowed) to eat. I dare say you know the picture ; and perhaps I tell the story wrong. However, just such a man, and just so wo-begone must this man of words appear when he is alone in his study ; with a frozen heart and a famished intellect ; and every now and then, perhaps, exclaiming with Alcibiades, " Oh ye Athenians ! What a world of hardship I endure to obtain your applause." So slightly is his knowledge worked into the texture of his mind, that I am persuaded a brain fever would sweep it all away. With this sketch of Messrs. Bouterwek and Schlegel, it is superfluous to add, that their criticisms are utterly *worthless*—being all words—words—words : however, with this difference, that Bouterwek's are simply =0, being the mere rubbishy sweepings from the works of literatuli long since defunct : but Schlegel's, agreeably to his natural haughtiness and superior talents, are bad in a positive sense—being

filled with such conceits, fancies, and fictions, as you would naturally expect from a clever man talking about what he had never, in any true sense of the word, read. (Note F.) Oh! genius of English good sense, keep any child of mine from ever sacrificing his peace and intellectual health, to such a life of showy emptiness, of pretence, of noise, and of words: and even with a view to the opinion of others, if it were worth while sacrificing very much to *that*, teach him how far more enviable is the reputation of having produced even one work, though but in a lower department of art, and which has given pleasure to myriads—(such suppose as “The Vicar of Wakefield”)—than to have lived in the wonderment of a gazing crowd, like a rope dancer or a posture master, with the fame of incredible attainments that tend to no man’s pleasure, and which perish to the remembrance of all men as soon as their possessor is in his grave.

Thus, at some risk of fatiguing you, I have endeavoured to sharpen your attention to the extreme danger which threatens a self-instructor in the besetting temptations to an over cultiva-

tion of languages ; temptations which, whether appealing to his vanity and love of ostentation—or to his craving for a multifarious mastery over books, terminate in the same evil of substituting a barren study of words, which is, besides, the most lingering of all studies, for the healthy exercises of the intellect. All the great European poets, orators, and wits, are mentioned in a man's hearing so often, and so much discussion is constantly going on about their comparative merits, that a body of irritation and curiosity collects about these names, and unites with more legitimate feelings to persuade a man that it is necessary he should read them all—each in his own language. In a celebrated satire (*The Pursuits of Literature*) much read in my youth, and which I myself read about twenty-five years ago, I remember one counsel—there, addressed to young men, but, in fact, of universal application. “I call upon them,” said the author, “to *dare* to be ignorant of many things ;” a wise counsel, and justly expressed ; for it requires much courage to forsake popular paths of knowledge, merely upon a conviction that they are not favourable to the ultimate

ends of knowledge. In you, however, *that* sort of courage may be presumed; but how will you "dare to be ignorant" of many things in opposition to the cravings of your own mind? Simply thus: destroy these false cravings by introducing a healthier state of the organ. A good scheme of study will soon show itself to be such by this one test—that it will exclude as powerfully as it will appropriate; it will be a system of repulsion no less than of attraction: once thoroughly possessed and occupied by the deep and genial pleasures of one truly intellectual pursuit, you will be easy and indifferent to all others that had previously teased you with transient excitement: just as you will sometimes see a man superficially irritated as it were with wandering fits of liking for three or four women at once, which he is absurd enough to call "being in love:" but once profoundly in love (supposing him capable of being so) he never makes such a mistake again, all his feelings after *that* being absorbed into a sublime unity. Now, without anticipating this scheme of study out of its place, yet in general you know whether your intentions lean most to science or to literature.

For, upon this decision, revolve the whole motives which can determine your choice of languages : as, for instance, if you are in quest of science or philosophy, no language in Europe at this day (unless the Turkish) is so slenderly furnished as the Spanish : on the other hand, for literature, I am disposed to think that after the English none is so wealthy (I mean in quality, not in quantity). Here, however, to prevent all mistakes, let me establish one necessary distinction. The word *literature* is a perpetual source of confusion, because it is used in two senses, and those senses liable to be confounded with each other. In a philosophical use of the word, literature is the direct and adequate antithesis of books of knowledge. But in a popular use, it is a mere term of convenience for expressing inclusively the total books in a language. In this latter sense, a dictionary, a grammar, a spelling-book, an almanack, a pharmacopœia, a parliamentary report, a system of farriery, a treatise on billiards, the court calendar, &c. belong to the literature. But in the philosophical sense, not only would it be ludicrous to reckon these as

parts of the literature, but even books of much higher pretensions must be excluded—as, for instance, books of voyages and travels, and generally all books in which the matter to be communicated is paramount to the manner or form of its communication (“ornari res ipsa negat, contenta doceri.”) It is difficult to construct the idea of “literature” with severe accuracy; for it is a fine art—the supreme fine art, and liable to the difficulties which attend such a subtle notion: in fact, a severe construction of the idea must be the *result* of a philosophical investigation into this subject, and cannot precede it. But for the sake of obtaining some expression for literature that may answer our present purpose, let us throw the question into another form. I have said that the antithesis of literature is books of knowledge. Now, what is that antithesis to *knowledge*, which is here implicitly latent in the word literature? The vulgar antithesis is *pleasure*: (“aut prodesse volunt, aut delectare poetæ.”) Books, we are told, propose to *instruct* or to *amuse*. Indeed! However, not to spend any words upon it, I suppose you will

admit that this wretched antithesis will be of no service to us. And, by the way, let me remark to you, in this as in other cases, how men by their own errors of understanding, by feeble thinking, and inadequate distinctions, forge chains of meanness and servility for themselves. For this miserable alternative being once admitted, observe what follows. In which class of books does the *Paradise Lost* stand? Among those which instruct, or those which *amuse*? Now, if a man answers, among those which instruct,—he lies: for there is no instruction in it, nor could be in any great poem, according to the meaning which the word must bear in this distinction, unless it is meant that it should involve its own antithesis. But if he says, “No—amongst those which amuse,”—then what a beast must he be to degrade, and in this way, what has done the most of any human work to raise and dignify human nature. But the truth is, you see that the idiot does not wish to degrade it; on the contrary, he would willingly tell a lie in its favour, if that would be admitted; but such is the miserable state of slavery to which he has

reduced himself by his own puny distinction ; for, as soon as he hops out of one of his little cells, he is under a necessity of hopping into the other. The true antithesis (Note F) to knowledge in this case is not *pleasure*, but power. All, that is literature, seeks to communicate power ; all, that is not literature, to communicate knowledge. Now, if it be asked what is meant by communicating power, I in my turn would ask by what name a man would designate the case in which I should be made to feel vividly, and with a vital consciousness, emotions which ordinary life rarely or never supplies occasions for exciting, and which had previously lain unawakened, and hardly within the dawn of consciousness—as myriads of modes of feeling are at this moment in every human mind for want of a poet to organize them?—I say, when these inert and sleeping forms *are* organized—when these possibilities *are* actualized,—is this conscious and living possession of mine *power*, or what is it ?

When in King Lear, the height, and depth, and breadth of human passion is revealed to us—and for the purposes of a sublime anta-

gonism is revealed in the weakness of an old man's nature, and in one night two worlds of storm are brought face to face—the human world, and the world of physical nature—mirrors of each other, semichoral antiphonies, strophe and antistrophe heaving with rival convulsions, and with the double darkness of night and madness, when I am thus suddenly startled into a feeling of the infinity of the world within me, is this power? or what may I call it? Space, again—what is it in most men's minds? The lifeless form of the world without us—a postulate of the geometrician, with no more vitality or real existence to their feelings, than the square root of two. But, if Milton has been able to *inform* this empty theatre, peopling it with Titanic shadows, forms that sat at the eldest counsels of the infant world, chaos and original night,—

—Ghostly shapes,

To meet at noontide, Fear and trembling Hope,

—Death the Skeleton,

And Time the Shadow—

so that, from being a thing to inscribe with diagrams, it has become under his hands a vital

agent on the human mind ; I presume that I may justly express the tendency of the *Paradise Lost*, by saying that it communicates power ; a pretension far above all communication of knowledge. Henceforth, therefore, I shall use the antithesis power and knowledge as the most philosophical expression for literature (i. e. *Literæ Humaniores*) and anti-literature (i. e. *Literæ didacticæ*—*Παιδεία*).

Now then, prepared with this distinction, let us inquire whether—weighing the difficulties against the benefits—there is an overbalance of motive for you with your purposes to study what are inaccurately termed (Note G) the “classical” languages. And, first, with respect to Greek. We have often had the question debated, and, in our own days, solemn challenges thrown out and solemn adjudications given on the question whether any benefit corresponding to the time and the labour can be derived from the study of the ancient classics. Hitherto, however, the question could not be rightly shaped : for, as no man chose to plead “amusement” as a sufficient motive for so great an undertaking, it was always debated

with a single reference to the *knowledge* involved in those literatures. But this is a ground wholly untenable. For let the knowledge be what it might, all knowledge is translatable; and translatable without one atom of loss. If this were all, therefore, common sense would prescribe that faithful translations should be executed of all the classics, and all men in future depend upon these vicarious labours. With respect to the Greek, this would soon be accomplished: for what is the knowledge which lurks in that language? All knowledge may be commodiously distributed into science and erudition: of the latter, (antiquities, geography, philology, theology, &c.) there is a very considerable body; of the former, but little; viz. the mathematical and musical works,—and the medical works: what else? Nothing that can deserve the name of science, except the single *organon* of Aristotle. With Greek medicine, I suppose that you have no concern. As to mathematics, a man must be an idiot if he were to study Greek for the sake of Archimedes, Apollonius, or Diophantus. In Latin or in French, you may find them all regularly trans-

lated : and parts of them embodied in the works of English mathematicians. Besides, if it were otherwise, where the notions and all the relations are so few—elementary and determinate, and the vocabulary therefore so scanty as in mathematics, it could not be necessary to learn Greek even if you were disposed to read the mathematicians in that language. I see no marvel in Halley's having translated an Arabic manuscript on mathematics, with no previous knowledge of Arabic : on the contrary, it is a case (and not a very difficult case) of the art of deciphering, so much practised by Wallis, and other great mathematicians contemporary with Halley. But all this is an idle disputation : for the knowledge of whatsoever sort which lies in Grecian mines, wretchedly as we are furnished with vernacular translations, the Latin version will always supply. This, therefore, is not the ground to be taken by the advocate of Greek letters. It is not for knowledge that Greek is worth learning, but for power. Here arises the question—of what value is this power ? i. e. how is the Grecian literature to be rated in relation to other literatures ? Now

is it not only because "De Carthagine satius est silere quam parciùs dicere," but also because in my judgment there is no more offensive form of levity than the readiness to speak on great problems, incidentally and occasionally,—that I shall wholly decline this question. We have hitherto seen no rational criticism on Greek literature ; nor, indeed, to say the truth, much criticism which teaches any thing, or solves any thing, upon any literature. I shall simply suggest one consideration to you. The question is limited wholly, as you see, to the value of the literature in the proper sense of that word. Now, it is my private theory, to which you will allow what degree of weight you please, that the Antique or pagan literature is a polar antagonist to the modern or Christian literature ; that each is an evolution from a distinct principle, having nothing in common but what is necessarily common to all modes of thought—viz. good sense and logic ; and that they are to be criticised from different stations and points of view. This same thought has occurred to others ; but no great advance is made simply by propounding the general thesis ;

and as yet nobody has done more. (Note H.) It is only by the developement of this thesis that any real service can be performed. ~~This~~ I have myself attempted, in a series of "reveries" on that subject; and, if you continue to hesitate on the question of learning Greek now that you know exactly how that question is shaped, and to what it points, my manuscript contains all the assistance that it is in *my* power to offer you in such a dilemma. The difference of the Antique from the Christian Literature, you must bear in mind, is not like that between English and Spanish literature—species and species—but as between genus and genus. The advantages therefore are—1, the *power*, which it offers generally as a literature; 2, the new phasis under which it presents the human mind; the Antique being the other hemisphere, as it were, which, with our own, or Christian hemisphere, composes the entire sphere of human intellectual energy.

So much for the Greek. Now as to the Latin, the case is wholly reversed. Here the literature is of far less value; and, on the whole, with your views, it might be doubted whether it would

recompense your pains. But the anti-literature (as for want of a strict antithesis I must call it) is inestimable; Latin having been the universal language of Christendom for so long a period. The Latin works since the restoration of letters, are alone of immense value for knowledge of every kind; much science, inexhaustible erudition; and to this day in Germany, and elsewhere on the Continent, the best part of the latter is communicated in Latin. Now, though all knowledge *is* (which power is not) adequately communicable by translation, yet as there is no hope that the immense bibliotheca of Latin accumulated in the last three centuries ever will be translated, you cannot possibly dispense with this language; and, that being so, it is fortunate that you have already a superficial acquaintance with it. The best means of cultivating it further, and the grounds of selection amongst the *modern* languages of Christendom, I will discuss fully in my next letter.

Yours, most truly,

X. Y. Z.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR SIR,

It is my misfortune to have been under the necessity too often of writing rapidly and without opportunities for after-revision. In cases where much *composition* is (Note I) demanded, this is a serious misfortune; and sometimes irreparable, except at the price of recasting the whole work. But to a subject like the present, little of what is properly called composition is applicable; and somewhat the less from the indeterminate form of *letters* into which I have purposely thrown my communications. Errors in composition apart, there can be no others of importance, except such as relate to the matter: and those are not at all the more incident to a man because he is in a hurry. Not to be too much at leisure is indeed often an advantage: on no occasion of their lives do men generally speak better than


on the scaffold and with the executioner at their side: partly indeed, because they are then most in earnest and unsolicitous about effect; but partly also, because the pressure of the time sharpens and condenses the faculty of abstracting the capital points at issue. On this account, I do not plead haste as an absolute and unmitigated disadvantage. Haste palliates what haste occasions. Now there is no haste which can occasion oversights, as to the matter, to him who has meditated sufficiently upon his subject: all that haste can do in such a case, is to affect the language with respect to accuracy and precision: and thus far I plead it. I shall never plead it as shrinking from the severest responsibility for the thoughts and substance of any thing I say; but often in palliation of expressions careless or ill-chosen. And at no time can I stand more in need of such indulgence than at present, when I write both hastily and under circumstances of—but no matter what; believe in general that I write under circumstances as unfavourable for careful selection of words as can well be imagined.

In my last letter I declined to speak of the

antique literature, as a subject too unwieldy and unmanageable for my limits. I now recur to it for the sake of guarding and restraining that particular sentence in which I have spoken of the Roman literature as inferior to the Greek. In common with all the world, I must of necessity think it so in the drama, and generally in poetry κατ' ἐξοχην. Indeed, for some forms of poetry, even of the lower order, it was the misfortune of the Roman literature that they were not cultivated until the era of fastidious taste, which in every nation takes place at a certain stage of society. They were harshly transplanted as exotics, and never passed through the just degrees of a natural growth on Roman soil. Notwithstanding this, the most exquisite specimens of the lighter lyric which the world has yet seen must be sought for in Horace: and very few writers of any country have approached to Virgil in the art of *composition*, however low we may be disposed at this day to rank him as a poet, when tried in the unequal contest with the sublimities of the Christian literature. The truth is (and this is worth being attended to)

that the peculiar sublimity of the Roman mind does not express itself, nor is it at all to be sought in their poetry. Poetry, according to the Roman ideal of it, was not an adequate organ for the grander movements of the national mind. Roman sublimity must be looked for in Roman acts, and in Roman sayings.

For the acts—see their history for a thousand years; the early and fabulous part not excepted, which, for the very reason that it *is* (Note J) fabulous, must be taken as so much the purer product of the Roman mind. Even the infancy of Rome was like the cradle of Hercules—glorified by splendid marvels:—“Nec licuit populis parvum te, Nile, videre.” For their sayings—for their anecdotes—their serious *bon mots*, there are none equal to the Roman in grandeur. “Englishman!” said a Frenchman once to me, “you that contest our claim to the sublime, and contend that ‘la manière noble’ of our artists wears a falsetto character, what do you think of that saying of a king of ours, That it became not the King of France to avenge the injuries of the Duke of Orleans (i. e. of himself under that title)?” “Think!”



said I, "Why, I think it a magnificent and regal speech. And such is my English generosity, that I heartily wish the Emperor Hadrian had not said the same thing fifteen hundred years before. (Note K.) I would willingly give five shillings myself to purchase the copyright of the saying for the French nation: for *they* want it; and the Romans could spare it. *Pereant qui ante nos nostra dixerunt!* Cursed be the name of Hadrian that stands between France and the sublimest of bon mots!" Where, again, will you find a more adequate expression of the Roman majesty, than in the saying of Trajan—*Imperatorem oportere statum mori*—that Cæsar ought to die standing; a speech of imperial grandeur! Implying that he, who was "the foremost man of all this world,"—and, in regard to all other nations, the representative of his own, should express its characteristic virtue in his farewell act—should die *in procinctu*—and should meet the last (Note L) enemy, as the first, with a Roman countenance and in a soldier's attitude. If this had an imperial—what follows had a consular majesty, and is almost

the grandest story upon record. Marius, the man who rose *à caligà* to be seven times consul, was in a dungeon: and a slave was sent in with commission to put him to death. These were the persons,—the two extremities of exalted and forlorn humanity, its vanward and its rearward man, a Roman consul and an abject slave. But their natural relations to each other were by the caprice of fortune monstrously inverted: the consul was in chains; the slave was for a moment the arbiter of his fate. By what spells, what magic, did Marius reinstate himself in his natural prerogatives? By what marvels drawn from heaven or from earth, did he, in the twinkling of an eye, again invest himself with the purple, and place between himself and his assassin a host of shadowy lictors? By the mere blank supremacy of great minds over weak ones. He *fascinated* the slave, as a rattlesnake does a bird. Standing “like Teneriffe,” he smote him with his eye, and said, “Tune, homo, audes occidere C. Marium?” Dost thou, fellow, presume to kill Caius Marius? Whereat the reptile, quaking under the voice, nor daring to affront the consular eye,

sank gently to the ground—turned round upon his hands and feet—and, crawling out of the prison like any other vermin, left Marius standing in solitude as steadfast and immoveable as the capitol.

In such anecdotes as these it is, in the actions of trying emergencies and their appropriate circumstances, that I find the revelation of the Roman mind under its highest aspect. The Roman mind was great in the presence of man, mean in the presence of nature : impotent to comprehend or to delineate the internal strife of *passion* (Note M), but powerful beyond any other national mind to display the energy of the *will* victorious over all passion. Hence it is that the true Roman sublime exists no where in such purity as in those works which were *not* composed with a reference to Grecian models. On this account I wholly dissent from the shallow classification which expresses the relations of merit between the writers of the Augustan period, and that which followed, under the type of a golden and silver age. As artists, and with reference to composition, no doubt many of the writers of the latter age

were rightly so classed: but an inferiority *quoad hoc*, argues no uniform and absolute inferiority: and the fact is, that in weight and grandeur of thought, the silver writers were much superior to the golden. Indeed, this might have been looked for on *à priori* grounds. For the silver writers were more truly Roman writers from two causes: first because they trusted more to their own native style of thinking; and looking less anxiously to Grecian archetypes, they wrote more naturally, feelingly, and originally: secondly, because the political circumstances of their times were advantageous, and liberated them from the suspicious caution which cramped the natural movements of a Roman mind on the first establishment of the monarchy. Whatever outrages of despotism occurred in the times of the silver writers, were sudden, transient, capricious, and personal in their origin and in their direction: but in the Augustan age, it was not the temper of Augustus personally, and certainly not the temper of the writers leading them to any excesses of licentious speculation, which created the danger of bold thinking; the danger was in the

times, which were unquiet and revolutionary : the struggle with the republican party was yet too recent ; the wounds and cicatrices of the state too green ; the existing order of things too immature and critical : the triumphant party still viewed *as a* party, and for that cause still feeling itself a party militant. Augustus had that chronic complaint of a “ crick in the neck,” of which later princes are said to have an acute attack every 30th of January. Hence a servile and timid tone in the literature. The fiercer republicans could not be safely mentioned : even Cicero it was not decorous to praise ; and Virgil, as perhaps you know, has by insinuation contrived to insult (Note N) his memory in the *Æneid*. But, as the irresponsible power of the emperors grew better secured, their jealousy of republican sentiment abated much of its keenness. And, considering that republican freedom of thought was the very matrix of Roman sublimity, it ought not to surprise us, that as fast as the national mind was lightened from the pressure which weighed upon the natural style of its sentiment—the

literature should recoil into a freer movement with an elasticity proportioned to the intensity and brevity of its depression. Accordingly, in Seneca the philosopher, in Lucan, in Tacitus, even in Pliny the younger, &c., but especially in the two first, I affirm that there is a loftiness of thought more eminently and characteristically Roman than in any preceding writers: and in *that* view to rank them as writers of a silver age, is worthy only of those who are servile to the common-places of unthinking criticism.

The style of thought in the silver writers, as a raw material, was generally more valuable than that of their predecessors; however much they fell below them in the art of working up that material. And I shall add further that, when I admit the vast defects of Lucan, for instance, as an artist, I would not be understood as involving in that concession the least toleration of the vulgar doctrine, that the diction of the silver writers is in any respect below the standard of pure latinity as existing in the writers of the Ciceronian age. A better structure of latinity, I will affirm boldly, does

not exist than that of Petronius Arbiter : and, taken as a body, the writers of what is denominated the silver age, are for diction no less Roman, and for thought much more intensely Roman, than any other equal number of writers from the preceding ages ; and, with a very few exceptions, are the best fitted to take a permanent station in the regard of men at your age or mine, when the meditative faculties, if they exist at all, are apt to expand—and to excite a craving for a greater weight of thought than is usually to be met with in the elder writers of the Roman literature. This explanation made, and having made that “amende honorable” to the Roman literature which my own gratitude demanded,—I come to the remaining part of my business in this letter—viz. the grounds of choice amongst the languages of modern Europe. Reserving to my conclusion any thing I have to say upon these *languages*, as depositories of *literature* properly so called, I shall first speak of them as depositories of *knowledge*. Among the four great races of men in Europe, viz. 1. The Celtic, occupying a few of the western extre-

mities (Note O) of Europe ; 2. The Teutonic, occupying the northern and midland parts ; 3. The Latin (blended with Teutonic tribes), occupying the south ; (Note P) and, 4. The Slavonic, occupying the east (Note Q), it is evident that of the first and the last, it is unnecessary to say any thing in this place, because their pretensions to literature do not extend to our present sense of the word. No Celt even, however extravagant, pretends to the possession of a body of Celtic philosophy, and Celtic science of independent growth. The Celtic and Slavonic languages therefore dismissed, our business at present is with those of the Latin and the Teutonic families. Now three of the Latin family, viz. the Italian, Spanish, and Portuguese, are at once excluded for the purpose before us : because it is notorious that, from political and religious causes, these three nations have but feebly participated in the general scientific and philosophic labours of the age. Italy, indeed, has cultivated natural philosophy with an exclusive zeal ; a direction probably impressed upon the national mind, by patriotic reverence for her great names in

that department. But merely for the sake of such knowledge (supposing no other motive) it would be idle to pay the price of learning a language; all the current contributions to science being regularly gathered into the general garner of Europe by the scientific journals both at home and abroad. Of the Latin languages, therefore, which are wholly the languages of Catholic nations, but one—i. e. the French—can present any sufficient attractions to a student in search of general knowledge. Of the Teutonic literatures, on the other hand, which are the adequate representatives of the Protestant intellectual interest in Europe (no Catholic nations speaking a Teutonic language except the southern states of Germany, and part of the Netherlands), all give way at once to the paramount pretensions of the English and the German. I do not say this with the levity of ignorance—as if presuming as a matter of course that in a small territory, such as Denmark, e. g. the literature must, of necessity, bear a value proportioned to its political rank: on the contrary, I have some acquaintance with the Danish (Note R) literature; and

though, in the proper sense of the word literature as a body of creative art, I cannot esteem it highly,—yet as a depository of knowledge in one particular direction—(viz. the direction of historical and antiquarian research), it has, undoubtedly, high claims upon the student's attention. But this is a direction in which a long series of writers descending from a remote antiquity is of more importance than a great contemporary body: whereas, for the cultivation of knowledge in a more comprehensive sense, and arrived at its present stage, large simultaneous efforts are of more importance than the longest successive efforts. Now, for such a purpose, it is self-evident that the means at the disposal of every state, must be in due proportion to its statistical rank. For not only must the scientific institutions,—the purchasers of books, &c. keep pace with the general progress of the country; but commerce alone, and the arts of life, which are so much benefited by science, naturally react upon science, in a degree proportioned to the wealth of every state in their demand for the aids of chemistry, mechanics, engineering, &c. &c.: a fact, with

its inevitable results, to which I need scarcely call your attention. Moreover, waiving all mere presumptive arguments, the bare amount of books annually published in the several countries of Europe, puts the matter out of all doubt that the great commerce of thought and knowledge in the civilized world is at this day conducted in three languages—the English, the German, and the French. You therefore, having the good fortune to be an Englishman, are to make your choice between the two last: and, this being so, I conceive that there is no room for hesitation—the “*detur pulchriori*,” being in this case (that is, remember, with an exclusive reference to *knowledge*) a direction easily followed.

Dr. Johnson was accustomed to say of the French literature, as the kindest thing he had to say about it, that he valued it chiefly for this reason—that it had a book upon every subject. How far this might be a reasonable opinion fifty years ago, and understood, as Dr. Johnson must have meant it, of the French literature as compared with the English of the same period, I will not pretend to say. It has certainly

ceased to be true even under these restrictions; and is in flagrant opposition to the truth, if extended to the French in its relation to the German. Undoubtedly the French literature holds out to the student some peculiar advantages, as what literature does not? some even which we should not have anticipated; for, though we justly value ourselves as a nation upon our classical education, yet no literature is poorer than the English in the learning of classical antiquities, our Bentleys even, and our Porsons, having thrown all their learning into the channel of philology; whilst a single volume of the Memoirs of the French Academy of Inscriptions contains more useful antiquarian research than a whole English library. In digests of history again, the French language is richer than ours, and in their Dictionaries of Miscellaneous knowledge (*not* in their Encyclopædias). But all these are advantages of the French only in relation to the English and not to the German literature, which, for vast compass, variety, and extent, far exceeds all others as a depository for the current accumulations of knowledge. The

mere number of books published annually in Germany, compared with the annual product of France and England, is alone a satisfactory evidence of this assertion. With relation to France it is a second argument in its favour, that the intellectual activity of Germany is not intensely accumulated in one great capital as it is in Paris; but whilst it is here and there converged intensely enough for all useful purposes (as at Berlin, Königsberg, Leipsic, Dresden, Vienna, Munich, &c.) it is also healthily diffused over the whole territory. There is not a sixth-rate town in Protestant Germany which does not annually contribute its quota of books: intellectual culture has manured the whole soil: not a district but it has penetrated—

——— Like Spring,
Which leaves no corner of the land untouch'd.

A third advantage on the side of Germany (an advantage for this purpose) is its division into a great number of independent states: from this circumstance, it derives the benefit of an internal rivalry amongst its several members, over and above that general external rivalry.

which it maintains with other nations. An advantage of the same kind we enjoy in England. The British nation is fortunately split into three great divisions ; and thus a national feeling of emulation and contest is excited—slight indeed, or none at all, on the part of the English (not from any merit, but from mere decay of patriotic feeling), stronger on the part of the Irish, and sometimes illiberally and odiously strong on the part of the Scotch (especially as you descend—below the rank of gentlemen.) But, disgusting as it sometimes is in its expression, this nationality is of great service to our efforts in all directions : a triple power is gained for internal excitement of the national energies ; whilst, in regard to any external enemy or any external rival, the three nations act with the unity of a single force. But the most conspicuous advantage of the German literature is its great originality and boldness of speculation, and the character of masculine austerity and precision impressed upon their scientific labours, by the philosophy of Leibnitz and Wolf heretofore, and by the severer philosophy of modern days. Speaking of the German litera-

ture at all, it would be mere affectation to say nothing on a subject so far-famed and so much misrepresented as this. Yet to summon myself to an effort of this kind at a moment of weariness and exhausted attention, would be the certain means of inflicting great weariness upon you. For the present, therefore, I take my leave, and am most truly yours,

X. Y. Z.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR SIR,

In my last letter, having noticed the English, the German, and the French, as the three languages in which the great commerce of thought and knowledge, in the civilized world, is at this day conducted ; and having attributed three very considerable advantages to the German as compared with the French ; I brought forward, in conclusion, as an advantage more conspicuous even than any I had before insisted on, the great originality and boldness of speculation which have distinguished the philosophic researches of Germany for the last 150 years (Note T). On this point, as it stood opposed to some prejudices and gross misstatements among ourselves, I naturally declined to speak, at the close of a letter which had, perhaps, already exhausted your attention. But, as it would be mere affecta-

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tion wholly to evade a question, about which so much interest (Note U) has gathered, and an interest which, from its objects and grounds, must be so durable, I gave you reason to expect, that I would say a few words on that which is at this time understood by the term *German Philosophy*—i. e. the philosophy of Kant. This I shall now do. But let me remind you for what purpose; that you may not lay to my charge, as a fault, *that* limited notice of my subject, which the nature and proportions of my plan prescribe. In a short letter it cannot be supposed possible, if it were otherwise right on this occasion, that I should undertake an analysis of a philosophy so comprehensive as to leave no track of legitimate interests untouched, and so profound as to presuppose many preparatory exercises of the understanding. What the course of my subject demands—is, that I should liberate the name and reputation of the Kantian philosophy from any delusion which may collect about its purposes and pretensions, through the representations of those who have spoken of it amongst ourselves. The case is this: I have advised

you to pay a special attention to the German literature—as a literature of knowledge, not of power: and amongst other reasons for this advice I have alleged the high character and pretensions of its philosophy: but these pretensions have been met by attacks, or by gross misrepresentations, from all writers within my knowledge, who have at all noticed the philosophy in this country. So far as these have fallen in your way, they must naturally have indisposed you to my advice; and it becomes, therefore, my business to point out any facts which may tend to disarm the authority of these writers, just so far as to replace you in the situation of a neutral and unprejudiced student.

The persons who originally introduced the Kantian philosophy to the notice of the English public, or rather attempted to do so, were two Germans—Dr. Willich and (not long after) Dr. Nitsch. Dr. Willich, I think, has been gone to Hades for these last dozen years; certainly his works have: and Dr. Nitsch, though not gone to Hades, is gone (I understand) to Germany; which answers my pur-

pose as well ; for it is not likely that a few words uttered in London will contrive to find out a man buried in the throng of thirty million Germans. *Quoad hoc*, therefore, Dr. Nitsch may be considered no less defunct than Dr. Willich ; and I can run no risk of wounding any body's feelings, if I should pronounce both doctors very eminent blockheads. It is difficult to say, which wrote the more absurd book. Willich's is a mere piece of book-making, and deserves no sort of attention. But Nitsch, who seems to have been a painstaking man, has produced a work which is thus far worthy of mention, that it reflects as in a mirror one feature common to most of the German commentaries upon Kant's works, and which it is right to expose. With very few exceptions, these works are constructed upon one simple principle : finding it impossible to obtain any glimpse of Kant's meaning or drift, the writers naturally asked themselves what was to be done ? Because a man does not understand one iota of his author, is he therefore not to comment upon him ? That were hard indeed ; and a sort of abstinence,

which it is more easy to recommend than to practise. Commentaries must be written ; and, if not by those who understand the system (which would be the best plan), then (which is clearly the second best plan) by those who do *not* understand it. Dr. Nitsch belonged to this latter very respectable body, for whose great numerical superiority to their rivals I can take upon myself to vouch. Being of their body, the worthy doctor adopted their expedient—which is simply this : Never to deliver any doctrine except in the master's words ; on all occasions to parrot the ipsissima verba of Kant ; and not even to venture upon the experiment of a new illustration drawn from their own funds. Pretty nearly upon this principle was it that the wretched Brucker and others have constructed large histories of philosophy : having no comprehension of the inner meaning and relations of any philosophic opinion, nor suspecting to what it tended, or in what necessities of the intellect it had arisen—how could the man do more than superstitiously adhere to that formula of words in which it had pleased the philosopher to clothe it ? It was unreasona-

ble to expect he should : to require of him that he should present it in any new aspect of his own devising—would have been tempting him into dangerous and perplexing situations : it would have been, in fact, a downright aggression upon his personal safety, and calling upon him to become *felo de se* ; every turn of a sentence might risk his breaking down : and no man is bound to risk his neck—credit—or understanding, for the benefit of another man's neck—credit—or understanding. "It's all very well," Dr. Nitsch and his brethren will say ; "it's all very well for you, gentlemen, that have no commenting to do—to understand your author : but to expect us to understand him also that have to write commentaries on him, for two—four—and all the way up to twelve volumes, 8vo.—just serves to show how far the unreasonableness of human nature can go." The doctor was determined on moral principles to make no compromise with such unreasonableness ; and, in common with all his brethren, set his face against understanding each and every chapter—paragraph—or sentence of Kant, so long as they were expected

to do duty as commentators. I treat the matter ludicrously : but in substance I assure you that I do no wrong to the learned (Note V) commentators : and under such auspices you will not suppose that Kant came before the English public with any advantage of patronage. Between two such supporters as a Nitsch on the right hand, and a Willich on the left, I know not *that* philosopher that would escape foundering. But, fortunately for Kant, the supporters themselves foundered : and no man, that ever I met with, had seen or heard of their books—or seen any man that *had* seen them. It did not appear that they were, or logically speaking could be, forgotten : for no man had ever remembered them.

The two doctors having thus broken down and set off severally to Hades and Germany, I recollect no authors of respectability who have since endeavoured to attract the attention of the English public to the Kantian philosophy, except 1. An anonymous writer in an early number of the Edinburgh Review ; 2. Mr. Coleridge ; 3. Mr. Dugald Stewart ; 4. Madame de Stael, in a work published, I be-

lieve, originally in this country, and during her residence amongst us. I do not add Sir William Drummond to this list, because my recollection of any thing he has written on the subject of Kant (in his *Academical Questions*) is very imperfect; nor Mr. W—— the reputed author of an article on Kant (the most elaborate, I am told, which at present exists in the English language) in the *Encyclopædia Londinensis*; for this essay, together with a few other notices of Kant in other *Encyclopædias*, or elsewhere, have not happened to fall in my way. The four writers above-mentioned were certainly the only ones on this subject who commanded sufficient influence, either directly in their own persons—or (as in the first case) vicariously in the channel through which the author communicated with the public, considerably to affect the reputation of Kant in this country for better or worse. None of the four, except Mr. Coleridge, having—or professing to have—any direct acquaintance with the original works of Kant, but drawing their information from imbecile French books, &c.—it would

not be treating the other three with any injustice to dismiss their opinions without notice : for even upon any one philosophical question, much more upon the fate of a great philosophical system supposed to be *sub judice*, it is as unworthy of a grave and thoughtful critic to rely upon the second-hand report of a flashy rhetorician—as it would be unbecoming and extra-judicial in a solemn trial to occupy the ear of the court with the gossip of a country-town. However, to omit no point of courtesy to any of these writers, I shall say a word or two upon each of them separately. The first and the third wrote in a spirit of hostility to Kant, the second and fourth as friends. In that order I shall take them. The writer of the article in the Edinburgh Review, I suppose upon the internal evidence to have been the late Dr. Thomas Brown, a pupil of Mr. Dugald Stewart's, and his successor in the Moral Philosophy chair at Edinburgh. This is a matter of no importance in itself ; nor am I in the habit of troubling myself or others with literary gossip of that sort : but I mention it as a conjecture of my

own—because, if I happen to be right, it would be a very singular fact, that the only two writers within my knowledge who have so far forgot the philosophic character as to attempt an examination of a vast and elaborate system of philosophy not in the original—not in any authorized or accredited Latin version (of which there were two even at that time)—not in any version at all, but in the tawdry rhetoric of a Parian *philosophie à la mode*, a sort of *philosophie pour les dames*,—that these two writers, thus remarkably agreeing in their readiness to forget the philosophic character, should also happen to have stood nearly connected in literary life. In such coincidences we suspect something more than a blind accident: we suspect the natural tendency of their philosophy, and believe ourselves furnished with a measure of its power to liberate the mind from rashness, from caprice, and injustice, in such deliberate acts, which it either suggests or tolerates. If their own philosophic curiosity was satisfied with information so slender,—mere justice required that they should not, on so slight and suspicious a warrant, have

grounded any thing in disparagement of the philosophy or its founder. The book reviewed by the Edinburgh reviewer, and relied on for his account of the Kantian philosophy, is the essay of Villars—a book so entirely childish that perhaps no mortification more profound could have fallen upon the reviewer than the discovery of the extent to which he had been duped by his author. Of this book no more needs to be said, than that the very terms do not occur in it which express the hinges of the system. Mr. Stewart has confided chiefly in Dégérando—a much more sober-minded author, of more good sense, and a greater zeal for truth, but, unfortunately, with no more ability to penetrate below the surface of the Kantian system. M. Dégérando is represented as an unexceptionable evidence by Mr. Stewart, on the ground that he is admitted to be so by Kant's "countrymen." The "countrymen" of Kant, merely *as* (Note V) countrymen, can have no more title to an opinion upon this point, than a Grantham man could have a right to dogmatize on Sir Isaac Newton's philosophy, on the ground that he was a fellow-townsmen

of Sir Isaac's. The air of Königsberg makes no man a philosopher. But if Mr. Stewart means that the competency of M. Dégérando has been admitted by those countrymen of Kant's whose educations have fitted them to understand him, and whose writings make it evident that they *have* understood him (such for instance, as Reinhold, Schulze, Tieftrunk, Beck, Fichte, and Schelling,) then he has been misinformed. The mere existence of such works as the *Histoire Comparée* of M. Dégérando, which cannot be regarded in a higher light than that of verbal indices to the corpus philosophiæ, is probably unknown to them; certainly, no books of that popular class are ever noticed by any of them, nor could rank higher in their eyes than an elementary school algebra in the eyes of a mathematician. If any man acknowledges Dégérando's attempt at a popular abstract of Kant as a sound one, *ipso facto*, he degrades himself from the right to any opinion upon the matter. The elementary notions of Kant, even the main problem of his great work, are not once so much as alluded to by Dégérando. And by the way,

if any man ever talks in your presence about Kant—and you suspect that he is talking without knowledge, and wish to put a stop to him,—I will tell you how you shall effect that end. Say to him as follows :—Sir, I am instructed by my counsel, learned in this matter, that the main problem of the philosophy you are talking of—lies involved in the term *transcendental*, and that it may be thus expressed—“*An detur aliquid transcendentalē in mente humanā.*” “Is there in the human mind any thing which realizes the notion of *transcendental* (as that notion is regulated and used by Kant ?)” Now as this makes it necessary above all things to master that notion in the fullest sense, I will thank you to explain it to me. And as I am further instructed that the answer to this question is affirmative, and is involved in the term *synthetic unity*—I will trouble you to make it clear to me wherein the difference lies between this and what is termed *analytic unity*. Thus speaking, you will in all probability gag him ; which is, at any rate, one desirable thing gained when a man insists on disturbing a company by disputing and

talking philosophy. But to return,—as there must always exist a strong presumption against philosophy of Parisian manufacture (which is in that department the Birmingham ware of Europe); secondly, as M. Dégérando had expressly admitted (in fact boasted) that he had a little trimmed and embellished the Kantian system, in order to fit it for the society of “*les gens comme il faut*,” and finally, as there were Latin versions, &c. of Kant, it must reasonably occur to any reader to ask why Mr. Stewart should not have consulted these? To this question Mr. Stewart answers—that he could not tolerate their “barbarous” style and nomenclature. I must confess that in such an answer I see nothing worthy of a philosopher; and should rather have looked for it from a literary *petit-maître*, than from an emeritus Professor of Moral Philosophy. Will a philosopher decline a useful experiment in physics, because it will soil his kid gloves? Who thinks or cares about style in such studies, that is sincerely and anxiously in quest of truth? (Note W.) In fact, *style*, in any proper sense, is no more a possible thing

in such investigations as the understanding is summoned to by Kant—than it is in Euclid's Elements. As to the nomenclature again, supposing that it *had* been barbarous, who objects to the nomenclature of modern chemistry, which is, *quoad materiam*, not only a barbarous, but a hybrid nomenclature?—Wherever law and intellectual order prevail, they *debarbarize* (if I may be allowed such a coinage) what in its elements might be barbarous: the form ennobles the matter. But how is the Kantian terminology barbarous, which is chiefly composed of Grecian or Latin terms? In constructing it, Kant proceeded in this way:—where it was possible, he recalled obsolete and forgotten terms from the Platonic philosophy, and from the schoolmen; or restored words abused by popular use to their original philosophic meaning. In other cases, when there happen to exist double expressions for the same notion, he called in and reminded them, as it were. In doing this, he was sometimes forestalled in part, and guided by the tendency of language itself. All languages, as it has been remarked, tend to clear

themselves of synonymes—as intellectual culture advances ; the superfluous words being taken up and appropriated by new shades and combinations of thought evolved in the progress of society. And long before this appropriation is fixed and petrified, as it were, into the acknowledged vocabulary of the language, an insensible *clinamen* (to borrow a Lucretian word) prepares the way for it. Thus, for instance, long before Mr. Wordsworth had unveiled the great philosophic distinction between the powers of *fancy* and *imagination*—the two words had begun to diverge from each other ; the first being used to express a faculty somewhat capricious (Note X) and exempted from law, the latter to express a faculty more self-determined. When, therefore, it was at length perceived, that under an apparent unity of meaning there lurked a real dualism, and for philosophic purposes it was necessary that this distinction should have its appropriate expression,—this necessity was met half way by the *clinamen* which had already affected the popular usage of the words. So again, in the words *Deist* and *Theist* ; naturally they

should express the same notion—the one to a Latin, the other to a Grecian ear. But of what use are such duplicates? It is well that the necessities of the understanding gradually reach all such cases by that insensible *clina-men* which fits them for a better purpose, than that of extending the mere waste fertility of language, viz. by taking them up into the service of thought. In this instance, *Deist* was used pretty generally throughout Europe, to express the case of him who admits a God, but under the fewest predicates that will satisfy the conditions of the understanding. A *Theist*, on the other hand, even in popular use, denoted him who admits a God with some further (transcendental) predicates—as, for example, under the relation of a moral governor to the world. In such cases as this, therefore, where Kant found himself already anticipated by the progress of language, he did no more than regulate and ordinate the evident *nisus* and tendency of the popular usage into a severe definition. Where, however, the notions were of too subtle a nature to be laid hold of by the popular understanding, and too little within

the daily use of life to be ever affected by the ordinary causes which mould the course of a language, there he commenced and finished the process of separation himself. And what were the uses of all this? Why the uses were these: *first*, in relation to the whole system of the transcendental philosophy: the new notions which were thus fixed and recorded, were necessary to the system: they were useful in proportion as *that* was useful—i. e. in proportion as it was true. *Secondly*, they extended the domain of human thought, apart from the system and independently of it. A perpetual challenge or summons is held out to the mind in the Kantian terminology to clear up and regulate its own conceptions, which, without discipline, are apt from their own subtle affinities to blend and run into each other. The new distinctions are so many intellectual problems to be mastered. And, even without any view to a formal study of the transcendental philosophy, great enlargement would be given to the understanding, by going through (Note Y) a Kantian dictionary, well explained, and well illustrated. This termi-

nology therefore was useful, 1. As a means to an end (being part of the system); 2. As an end in itself. So much for the uses: as to the power of mind put forth in constructing it (between which and the uses lies the valuation of Kant's service; for, if no uses, then we do not thank him for any difficulty he may have overcome; if no difficulty overcome, then we do not ascribe as a merit to him any uses which may flow from it)—as to the power of mind put forth in constructing it, I do not think it likely that you will make the same mistake which I have heard from some unreflecting persons, and which in fact lurks at the bottom of much that has been written against Kant's obscurity, as though Kant had done no more than impose new names. Certainly, if that were all, the merit would not be very conspicuous. It could cost little effort of mind to say—let this be A, and that be D: let this notion be called *transcendent*, and that be called *transcendental*. Such a statement, however, supposes the ideas to be already known, and familiar—and simply to want names. In this lies the blunder. When Kant

assigned the names, he created the ideas ; i. e. he drew them within the consciousness. In assigning to the complex notion X the name *transcendental*, Kant was not simply transferring a word which had previously been used by the schoolmen to a more useful office ; he was bringing into the service of the intellect a new birth ; that is, drawing into a synthesis, which had not existed before *as* a synthesis, parts or elements which exist and come forward hourly in every man's mind. I urge this upon your attention, because you will often hear such challenges thrown out as this (or others involving the same error)—“ Now, if there be any sense in this Mr. Kant's writings, let us have it in good old mother English.” That is, in other words, transfer into the unscientific language of life, scientific notions and relations which it is not fitted to express. The challenger proceeds upon the common error of supposing all ideas fully developed to exist in *esse* in all understandings : ergo, in his own : and all that are in his own he thinks that we can express in English. Thus, the challenger, on his notions, has you in a

dilemma at any rate : for if you do not translate it, then it confirms his belief that the whole is jargon : if you *do* (as doubtless, with the help of much periphrasis, you may translate it into English, that will be intelligible to a man who already understands the philosophy), then where was the use of the new terminology ? But the way to deal with this fellow is as follows : My good sir, I shall do what you ask : but, before I do it, I beg that you will oblige me by, 1. Translating this mathematics into the language of chemistry : 2. By translating this chemistry into the language of mathematics : 3. Both into the language of cookery : and finally, solve me the Cambridge problem—"Given the captain's name, and the year of our Lord, to determine the longitude of the ship." This is the way to deal with such fellows.

The terminology of Kant then is not a rebaptism of ideas already existing in the universal consciousness : it is, in part, an enlargement of the understanding by new territory (of which I have spoken) ; and, in part, a better regulation of its old territory. This

regulation is either negative—and consists in limiting more accurately the boundary line of conceptions that had hitherto been imperfectly defined; or it is positive—and consists in the substitution of names which express the relations and dependencies of the object (Note Z) (*termini organici*) for the conventional names which have arisen from accident, and do *not* express those relations (*termini bruti*). It is on this principle that the nomenclature of chemistry is constructed: substances, that were before known by arbitrary and non-significant names, are now known by systematic names,—i. e. such as express their relations to other parts of the system. In this way a terminology becomes in a manner organic; and being itself a product of an advanced state of the science, is an important reagent for facilitating further advances. •

These are the benefits of a sound terminology: to which let me add, that no improved terminology can ever be invented, nay, hardly any plausible one, which does not presuppose an improved theory. Now surely benefits such as these ought to outweigh any offence

to the ears or the taste, if there were any. But the elegance of coherency is the sole elegance which a terminology needs to possess, or indeed can possess : the understanding is, in this case, the arbiter ; and, where *that* approves, it must be a misplaced fastidiousness of feeling which does not submit itself to the presiding faculty. As an instance of a repulsive terminology, I would cite that of Aristotle, which has something harsh and technical in it that prevents it from ever blending with the current of ordinary language ; even to this, however, so far as it answers its purposes, the mind soon learns to reconcile itself. But here, as in other more important points, the terminology of Kant is advantageously distinguished from the Aristotelian, by adapting itself with great ductility to any variety of structure and arrangement, incident to a philosophic diction.

I have spoken so much at length on the subject of Kant's terminology, because this is likely to be the first stumbling-block to the student of his philosophy ;—and because it has been in fact the main subject of attack amongst those who have noticed it in this country ; if *that* can be called attack which

proceeds in acknowledged ignorance of the original works.

A much more serious attack upon Kant has been the friendly notice of Madame de Staël. The sources from which she drew her opinions were understood to be the two Schlegels; and, probably, M. Dégérando. Like some countrymen of Kant's, (*e. g.* Kiesewetter) she has contrived to translate his philosophy into a sense which leaves it tolerably easy to apprehend—but unfortunately at the expense of all definite purpose, applicability, or philosophic meaning. On the other hand, Mr. Coleridge, whose great philosophic powers and undoubted acquaintance with the works of Kant would have fitted him beyond any man to have explained them to the English student, has unfortunately too little talent for teaching or communicating any sort of knowledge—and apparently too little simplicity of mind, or zealous desire to do so. Hence it has happened that so far from assisting Kant's progress in this country, Mr. Coleridge must have retarded it by expounding the oracle in words of more Delphic obscurity than the German

original could have presented to the immaturest student. It is, moreover, characteristic of Mr. Coleridge's mind that it never gives back any thing as it receives it : all things are modified and altered in passing through his thoughts : and from this cause, I believe, combined with his aversion to continuous labour, arises his indisposition to mathematics ; for *that* he must be content to take as he finds it. Now this indocility of mind greatly unfits a man to be the faithful expounder of a philosophic system : and it has, in fact, led Mr. Coleridge to make various misrepresentations of Kant : one only, as it might indispose you to pay any attention to Kant, I shall notice. In one of his works he has ascribed to Kant the foppery of an exoteric, and an esoteric doctrine : and that upon grounds wholly untenable. The direct and simple-minded Kant, I am persuaded, would have been more shocked at this suspicion than any other with which he could have been loaded.

I throw the following remarks together, as tending to correct some of the deepest errors with which men come to the examination of

philosophic systems, whether as students or as critics.

1. A good terminology will be one of the first results from a good theory : and hence, though a coherent terminology is not a sufficient evidence in favour of a system, the absence of such a terminology is a sufficient evidence against it.

2. It is asked which is the true philosophy ? But this is not the just way of putting the question :—the purpose of philosophy is not so much to accumulate positive truths in the first place—as to rectify the position of the human mind, and to correct its mode of seeing. The progress of the human species in this path is not direct but oblique : one philosophy does not differ from another solely by the amount of truth and error which it brings forward ; there is none, which has ever had much interest for the human mind, but will be found to contain some truth of importance, or some approximation to it : one philosophy has differed from another rather by the station it has taken, and the aspect under which it has contemplated its object.

3. It has been objected to Kant by some critics in this country, that his doctrines are in some instances reproductions only of doctrines brought forward by other philosophers. The instances alleged have been very unfortunate : but doubtless whatsoever truth is contained (according to the last remark) in the erroneous systems, and sometimes in the very errors themselves of the human mind, will be gathered up in its progress by the true system. Where the erroneous path has wandered in all directions, has returned upon itself perpetually, and crossed the field of inquiry with its mazes in every direction,—doubtless the path of truth will often intersect it—and perhaps for a short distance coincide with it : but that in this coincidence it receives no impulse or determination from that with which it coincides—will appear from the self-determining force which will soon carry it out of the same direction as inevitably as it entered it.

4. The test of a great philosophical system is often falsely conceived : men fancy a certain number of great outstanding problems of the highest interest to human nature, upon

which every system is required to try its strength; and *that* will be the true one, they think, which solves them all; and *that* the best approximation to the true one which solves most. But this is a most erroneous way of judging. True philosophy will often have occasion to show that these supposed problems are no problems at all, but mere impositions of the mind upon itself, arising out of its unrectified position—errors grounded upon errors. A much better test of a sound philosophy than the number of the pre-existing problems which it solves will be the quality of those which it proposes. By raising the station of the spectator it will bring a region of new inquiry within his view; and the very faculty of comprehending these questions will often depend on the station from which they are viewed. For, as the earlier and ruder problems, that stimulate human curiosity, often turn out baseless and unreal, so again the higher order of problems will be incomprehensible to the undisciplined understanding. This is a fact which should never be lost sight of by those who presume upon their natural and un-

cultivated powers of mind to judge of Kant—Plato—or any other great philosopher.

5. But the most general error which I have ever met with as a ground for unreasonable expectations in reference not to Kant only but to all original philosophers—is the persuasion which men have that their understandings contain already in full developement all the notions which any philosophy can demand; and this not from any vanity, but from pure misconception. Hence they naturally think that all which the philosopher has to do is to point to the elements of the knowledge as they exist ready prepared, and forthwith the total knowledge of the one is transferred to any other mind. Watch the efforts of any man to master a new doctrine in philosophy, and you will find that involuntarily he addresses himself to the mere dialectic labour of transposing, dissolving, and recombining, the notions which he already has. But it is not thus that any very important truth can be developed in the mind. New matter is wanted as well as new form. And the most important remark which I can suggest as a caution to those who ap-

proach a great system of philosophy as if it were a series of riddles and their answers, is this :—no complex or very important truth was ever yet transferred in full developement from one mind to another : truth of that character is not a piece of furniture to be shifted ; it is a seed which must be sown, and pass through the several stages of growth. No doctrine of importance can be transferred in a matured shape into any man's understanding from without : it must arise by an act of genesis within the understanding itself.

With this remark I conclude ; and am—

Most truly yours,

X. Y. Z.

NOTES.

NOTE A.

THAT this appears on the very face of his writings, may be inferred from a German work, published about two years ago, by a Hamburg barrister (I think)—Mr. Jacobs. The subject of the book is—the Modern Literature of England, with the lives, &c., of the most popular authors. It is made up in a great measure from English literary journals; but not always; and in the particular case of the author now alluded to, Mr. Jacobs imputes to him not merely too lively a sensitiveness to censure, but absolutely a "*wasserscheue*" (hydrophobia) with regard to reviewers and critics. How Mr. Jacobs came to use so strong an expression, or this particular expression, I cannot guess; unless it were that he had happened to see (which however does not appear) in a work of this eloquent Englishman, the following picturesque sentence:—"By an unconscionable extension of the old adage—*Noscitur a socio*, my friends are never under the waterfall of criticism, but I must be wet through

with the spray."—*Spray*, indeed ! I wish some of us knew no more of these angry cataracts than their spray.

NOTE B.

Not for the sake of any exception in its favour from the general censure here pronounced on this body of essays, but for its extraordinary tone of passion and frantic energy, and at times of noble sentiment, eloquently expressed, I must notice as by far the most memorable of these essays of the 17th century—that of Joachim Forz Ringelberg, *On the Method of Study* (De Ratione Studii). It is one of those books which have been written most evidently not merely by a madman (as many thousands have) but by a madman under a high paroxysm of his malady : and, omitting a few instances of affectation and puerility, it is highly affecting. It appears that the author, though not thirty years of age at the date of his book, was afflicted with the gravel ; according to his belief incurably ; and much of the book was actually written in darkness (on waxen tablets, or on wooden tablets, with a *stylus* formed of charred bones) during the sleepless nights of pain consequent upon his disease. "Ætas abiit," says he, "reditura nunquam—Ah ! nunquam reditura ! Tametsi annum nunc solùm trigesimum ago, spem tamen

ademit calculi morbus." And again: "Sic interim meditantem calculi premunt, ut gravi ipsa dolore mœreat mens, et plerumque noctes abducant insomnes angor." Towards the end it is that he states the remarkable circumstances under which the book was composed. "Bonam partem libri hujus in tenebris scripsi, quando somnus me ob calculi dolorem reliquerat; idque quum sol adversa nobis figeret vestigia, nocte vagante in medio cœlo. Decrat lumen; verum tabulas habeo, quibus etiam in tenebris utor." It is singular that so interesting a book should nowhere have been noticed to my knowledge in English literature, except, indeed, in a slight and inaccurate way, by Dr. Vicesimus Knox, in his *Winter Evening Lucubrations*.

NOTE C.

Accordingly our fashionable moral practitioner for this generation, Dr. Paley, who prescribes for the consciences of both Universities, and indeed, of most respectable householders, has introduced a good deal of casuistry into his work, though not under that name. In England, there is an aversion to the mere name, founded partly on this, that casuistry has been most cultivated by Roman Catholic divines, and too much with a view to an indulgent and dispensing morality;

and partly on the excessive subdivision and hair-splitting of cases; which tends to the infinite injury of morals, by perplexing and tampering with the conscience, and by presuming morality to be above the powers of any but the subtlest minds. All this, however, is but the abuse of casuistry; and without casuistry of some sort or other, no practical decision could be made in the accidents of daily life. Of this, on a fitter occasion, I could give a cumulative proof. Meantime, let it suffice to observe that law, which is the most practical of all things, is a perpetual casuistry; in which an immemorial usage, a former decision of the court, or positive statute, furnishes the major proposition; and the judgment of the jury, enlightened by the knowledge of the bench, furnishes the minor or casuistical proposition.

NOTE D.

Especially one, whose title I forget, by Vater, the editor and completer of the *Mithridates*, after Adelung's death. By the way, for the sake of the merely English reader, it may be well to mention that the *Mithridates* is so called, with an allusion to the great king of that name contemporary with Sylla, Lucullus, &c., of whom the tradition was that, in an immense and polyglot army, composed from a great variety of nations, he could talk to every soldier in his own language.

NOTE E.

See the advertisements of the humblest schools; in which, however low the price of tuition, &c., is fixed, French never fails to enter as a principal branch of the course of study. To which fact I may add, that even twelve or fifteen years ago I have seen French circulating libraries in London, chiefly supported by people in a humble rank.

NOTE F.

The most disengenuous instances in Schlegel of familiar acquaintance claimed with subjects of which he is necessarily ignorant—are the numerous passages in which he speaks of philosophers, especially of Spinoza, Leibnitz, and Kant. In such cases, his sentences are always most artificially and jesuitically constructed, to give him the air of being quite at his ease on the one hand—and yet on the other to avoid committing himself by too much descent into particulars. So dangerous, however, is it for the ablest man to attempt speaking of what he does not understand,—that, as a sailor will detect a landsman, however expert in the use of nautical diction, before he has uttered two sentences,—so with all his art and finesse, and speaking

besides to questions of his own choosing, yet cannot Schlegel escape detection in any one instance when he has attempted to act the philosopher. Even where the thing said is not otherwise objectionable, it generally detects itself as the remark of a novice—by addressing itself to something extra-essential in the philosophy, and which a true judge would have passed over as impertinent to the real business of the system.—Of the ludicrous blunders which inevitably arise in both Bouterwek and Schlegel, from hasty reading, or no reading at all, I noted some curious instances in my pocket-book; but not having it with me, I shall mention two from memory. Bouterwek and Schlegel would both be highly offended, I suppose, if I were to doubt whether they had ever read the *Paradise Lost*. "Oh! calumny—vile calumny! We that have given such fine criticisms upon it—not to have read it!" Yes; but there is such a case *in rerum naturâ* as that of criticising a work which the critic had not even seen. Now, that Bouterwek had not read the *Paradise Lost*, I think probable from this:—Bodmer, during part of the first half of the last century, as is known to the students of German literature, was at the head of a party who supported the English literature against the French party of the old dolt Gottsched. From some work of Bodmer's, Bouterwek quotes with praise a passage which, from being in plain German prose, he supposes to be Bodmer's—but which unfortunately happens to be a passage in the *Paradise Lost*, and so memorable a passage, that no one having once read

it could have failed to recognise it. So much for Bouterwek : as to Schlegel, the presumption against him rests upon this : he is lecturing Milton in a high professor's style for his choice of a subject : Milton, says he, did not consider that the Fall of Man was but an inchoate action, but a part of a system, of which the Restoration of Man is another and equally essential part. The action of the *Paradise Lost* is, therefore, essentially imperfect. (Quoting from memory, and from a memory some years old, I do not pretend to give the words—but this is the sense.) Now, *pace tanti viri*, Milton *did* consider this ; and has provided for it by a magnificent expedient which a man who had read the *Paradise Lost* would have been likely to remember—viz. by the Vision combined with the Narrative of the Archangel, in which his final restoration is made known to Adam ; without which, indeed, to say nothing of Mr. Schlegel's objection, the poem could not have closed with that *repose* necessary as the final impression of any great work of art.

NOTE G.

For which distinction, as for most of the sound criticism on poetry, or any subject connected with it that I have ever met with, I must acknowledge my obligations to many years' conversation with Mr.

Wordsworth. Upon this occasion it may be useful to notice that there is a rhetorical use of the word "power," very different from the analytic one here introduced, which also is due originally to Mr. Wordsworth, and will be found in no book before 1798; this is now become a regular slang term in London conversation. In reference to which, it is worth notice that a critic, speaking of the late Mr. Shelley, a year or two ago, in the most popular literary journal of the day, said, "It is alleged that there is power in Mr. Shelley's poetry; now there can be no power shown in poetry, except by writing good poems" (or words to that effect). Waiving, however, the question of Mr. Shelley's merits, so far is this remark from being true—that the word was originally introduced expressly to provide for the case where, though the poem was *not* good from defect in the *composition*, or from other causes, the stamina and *matériel* of good poetry, as fine thinking and passionate conceptions, could not be denied to exist.

NOTE H.

A late writer has announced it as a matter of discovery, that the term "classics" is applicable also to the modern languages. But surely this was never doubted by any man who considered the meaning and

origin of the term. It is drawn, as the reader must be reminded, from the political economy of Rome. Such a man was rated as to his income in the third class, such another in the fourth, and so on; but he who was in the highest was said emphatically to be of *the* class, "classicus"—a class-man, without adding the number, as in that case superfluous. Hence, by an obvious analogy, the best authors were rated as *classici*, or men of the highest class; just as in English we say—"men of rank"—absolutely for men who are in the highest ranks of the state. The particular error, by which this mere formal term of relation was *materialized* (if I may so say) in one of its accidents (*viz.* the application to Greek and Roman writers), is one of the commonest and most natural.

NOTE I.

Nor do I much expect, *will* do more; which opinion I build on the particular formula chosen for expressing the opposition of the antique and the Christian literature—*viz.* the classical and the romantic. This seeming to me to imply a total misconception of the true principle on which the distinction rests, I naturally look for no further developements of the thesis from that quarter.

NOTE J.

“Composition.” This word I use in a sense, not indeed peculiar to myself, but yet not very common—nor any where, that I know of, sufficiently developed. It is of the highest importance in criticism ; and therefore, I shall add a note upon the true construction of the idea—either at the end of this letter or the next, according to the space left.

NOTE K.

In addition to the arguments lately urged in the Quarterly Review, for bastardizing and degrading the early history of Rome, I may here mention two others, alleged many years ago in conversation by a friend of mine. 1. *The immoderate length of time assigned to the reigns of the kings.* For though it is possible that one king's reign may cover two entire generations (as that of George III.) or even two and a half (as that of Louis XIV.), yet it is in the highest degree improbable, that a series of seven kings immediately consecutive, should average, in the most favourable cases, more than 24 years for each : for the proof of which, see the Collective Chronology of Ancient and Modern Europe. 2. *The dramatic and artificial casting of the parts for*

these kings. Each steps forward as a scenical person to play a distinct part or character. One makes Rome: another makes laws; another makes an army; another religious rites, &c. And last of all comes a gentleman who "enacts the brute part" of destroying in effect what his predecessors had constructed; and thus furnishes a decorous catastrophe for the whole play, and a magnificent birth for the republican form of government.

NOTE L.

Submonente quodam ut in pristinos inimicos animadverteret, negavit se ita facturum; adjectâ civili voce,—Minime licere Principi Romano, ut quæ privatus agitasset odia—ista Imperator exequi. *Spartian, in Had.*—Vid. *Histor. August.*

NOTE M.

Neither let it be objected that it is irrational to oppose what there is no chance of opposing with success. When the Roman Senate kept their seats immovably upon the entrance of the Gauls reeking from the storm of Rome, they did it not as supposing that this spec-

tacle of senatorial dignity could disarm the wrath of their savage enemy ; if they had, their act would have lost all its splendour. The language of their conduct was this : so far as the grandeur of the will is concerned, we have carried our resistance to the last extremity, and have expressed it in the way suitable to our rank. For all beyond we are not answerable ; and, having recorded our " protest " in such an emphatic language, death becomes no dishonour. The *stantem mori* expresses the same principle ; but in a symbolic act.

NOTE N.

So palpable is this truth, that the most unreflecting critics have hence been led to suspect the pretensions of the Atys to a Roman origin.

NOTE O.

Orabunt alii causas melius. *Æn.* VI.—an opinion upon the Grecian superiority in this point, which is so doubtful even to us in our perfect impartiality at this day—as a general opinion without discrimination of persons, that we may be sure it could not spontaneously have occurred to a Roman in a burst of patriotic feeling, and must have been deliberately

manufactured to meet the malignant wishes of Augustus. More especially because, in whatever relation of opposition or of indifference to the principles of a military government, to the *Parcere subjectis et debellare superbos*, Virgil might view the Fine Arts of painting, statuary, &c., he could not but have viewed the Arts of forensic eloquence as standing in the closest alliance with that principle.

NOTE P.

Viz. 1. in the Cornish, Welch, Manks, Highland Scotch, and Irish provinces of the British empire (in the first and last it is true that the barbarous Celtic blood has been too much improved by Teutonic admixture, to allow of our considering the existing races as purely Celtic: this, however, does not affect the classification of their genuine literary relics): 2, in Biscay: and 3, in Basse Bretagne (Armorica): to say nothing of a Celtic district said to exist in the Alps, &c.

NOTE Q.

Viz. Iceland, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany, Netherlands, England, and Scotch Lowlands.

NOTE R.

Viz. Italy, France, Spain, and Portugal.

NOTE S.

Viz. in a zone belting Europe from the Frozen Ocean through the Russian empire (including Poland) to the Illyrian provinces on the Adriatic.

NOTE T.

I take this opportunity of mentioning a curious fact which I ascertained about twelve years ago when studying the Danish. The English and Scotch philologists have generally asserted that the Danish invasions in the ninth and tenth centuries, and their settlements in various parts of the island (as Lincolnshire, Cumberland, &c.) had left little or no traces of themselves in the language. This opinion has been lately reasserted in Dr. Murray's work on the European languages. It is, however, inaccurate. For the remarkable dialect spoken amongst the lakes of Cumberland and Westmoreland, together with the names of the mountains, tarns, &c. most of which resist all

attempts to unlock their meaning from the Anglo-Saxon, or any other form of the Teutonic, are pure Danish—generally intelligible from the modern Danish of this day, but in all cases from the elder form of the Danish. Whenever my *Opera Omnia* are collected, I shall reprint a little memoir on this subject, which I inserted about four years ago in a provincial newspaper: or possibly before that event, for the amusement of the lake-tourists, Mr. Wordsworth may do me the favour to accept it as an appendix to his work on the English Lakes.

NOTE U.

Dating from the earliest works of Leibnitz, rather more.

NOTE V.

I have heard it alleged as a reason why no great interest in the German philosophy can exist, or can be created amongst the English—that there is no “demand for books on that subject:”—in which remark there is a singular confusion of thought. Was there any “demand” for the Newtonian philosophy, until the Newtonian philosophy appeared?—How should there

be any "demand," for books which do not exist? But considering the lofty pretensions of the Kantian philosophy, it would argue a gross ignorance of human nature to suppose, that no interest had already attended the statement of these pretensions whenever they have been made known: and, in fact, amongst thoughtful and intellectual men a very deep interest has long existed on the subject, as my own experience has been sufficient to convince me. Indeed what evidence could be alleged more strong of apathy and decay in all intellectual activity, and in all honourable direction of intellectual interests, than the possibility that a systematic philosophy should arise in a great nation near to our own, and should claim to have settled for ever many of the weightiest questions, which concern the dignity and future progress of the human species—and should yet attract no attention or interest? We may be assured that no nation, not thoroughly emasculated in power of mind—i. e. so long as any severe studies survive amongst her, can ever be so far degraded. But these judgments come of attending too much to the movements of what is called "the literary world:" literature very imperfectly represents the intellectual interests of any people: and literary people are in a large proportion as little intellectual people as any one meets with.

NOTE W.

Under this denomination I comprehend all the rabble of abbreviators, abstractors, dictionary-makers, &c. &c. attached to the establishment of the Kantian philosophy. One of the last, by the way, Schmidt, the author of a Kantian dictionary, may be cited as the *beau idéal* of Kantian commentators. He was altogether agreed with Dr. Nitsch upon the duty of not understanding one's author; and acted up to his principle through life—being, in fact, what the Cambridge men call a *Bergen-op-zoom*, i. e. one that sturdily defies his author—stands a siege of twelve or twenty years upon his understanding—and holds out to the last impregnable to all assaults of reason or argument, and the heaviest batteries of common sense.

NOTE X.

The reader may suppose that this could not possibly have been the meaning of Mr. Stewart. But a very general mistake exists as to the terminology of Kant—as though a foreigner must find some difficulties in it which are removed to a native. “His own countrymen,” says a respectable literary journal, when speaking of Kant (*Edinburgh Monthly Review* for August, 1820, p. 168,)—“His own countrymen find it difficult

to comprehend his meaning; and they dispute about it to this day." Why not? The terminology of Kant is partly Grecian—partly scholastic; and how should either become intelligible to a German, *qua* German, merely because they are fitted with German terminations and inflexions?

NOTE Y.

The diction of the particular book, which had been recommended to Mr. Stewart's attention—viz. the *Expositio Systematica* of Phiseldek, a Danish professor, has all the merits which a philosophic diction can have, being remarkably perspicuous, precise, simple, and unaffected. It is too much of a mere metaphor of Kant, and has too little variety of illustration: otherwise I do not know a better digest of the philosophy.

NOTE Z.

Which distinction comes out still more strongly in the secondary derivative *fanciful*, and the primary derivative *fantastic*: I say primary derivative—in reference to the history of the word:—1, *φαντασία*,

whence *phantasy* :—2, for metrical purposes, *phant'sy* (as it is usually spelt in Sylvester's *Du Bartas*, and other scholarlike poems of that day :)—3, by dropping the *t* in pronunciation ; phansy or fancy. Now from No. 1, comes *fantastic* ; from No. 3, comes *fanciful*.

NOTE AA.

In some cases it is true that the construction of the ideas is posterior to the system, and presupposes a knowledge of it rather than precedes it ; but this is not generally true.

NOTE BB.

In a conversation which I once had with the late Bishop of Llandaff, on the subject of Kant, he objected chiefly to the terminology, and assigned, as one instance of what seemed to him needless innovations, the word *apperception*. "If this word means self-consciousness," said he, "I do not see why Mr. Kant might not have contented himself with what contented his father." But the truth is, that this word exactly illustrates the explanation made above : it expresses one fact in a system *sub ratione*, and with a retrospect to

another. This would have been the apology for the word : however, in this particular instance, I chose rather to apologize for Kant, by alleging that Wolf and Leibnitz had used the word ; so that it was an established word before the birth of the transcendental philosophy ; and it might therefore be doubted, whether Mr. Kant, senior, *had* contented himself in this case with less than Mr. Kant, junior.



T H E E N D .

S E L E C T I O N
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- Bayle, *Dictionnaire Historique et Critique*, 16 tom. 8vo. half bound. Paris, 1820. 30 Dollars.
- Gibbon, (Edward,) *Miscellaneous Works, with Life by Sheffield*, large paper, 5 vols. 8vo. half calf, very neat. London, 1814. 25 Dollars.
- Molière, *Œuvres de, complètes, avec les notes de tous les commentateurs*, edit. pub. par. Aimé-Martin, 8 vols. 8vo. ornée de 18 gravures et d'un portrait d'après les dessins de Desenne, half calf, very neat. Paris, 1824-6. 20 Dollars.
- Boccaccio, (Giovanni,) *Il Decamerone*, 5 vols. 8vo. very highly illustrated. London, 1757. 5 Dollars.
- Flugel's *Complete Dictionary of the English and German and German and English Languages*, 2 vols. 8vo. boards. Lipsiæ, 1838. 10 Dollars.
- Bruckeri *Historia Critica Philosophiæ*, 6 vols. 4to. half bound. Lips., 1767. 32 Dollars.
- Hume's, (David,) *Philosophical Works, including all the essays, and exhibiting the more important alterations and corrections in the successive editions published by the Author*, 4 vols. 8vo. boards. Edinburgh, 1826. 15 Dollars.
- Corpus Scriptorum Historiæ Byzantinæ*, 30 vols. 8vo. paper. Bonnæ, 1829, &c. 30 Dollars.
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